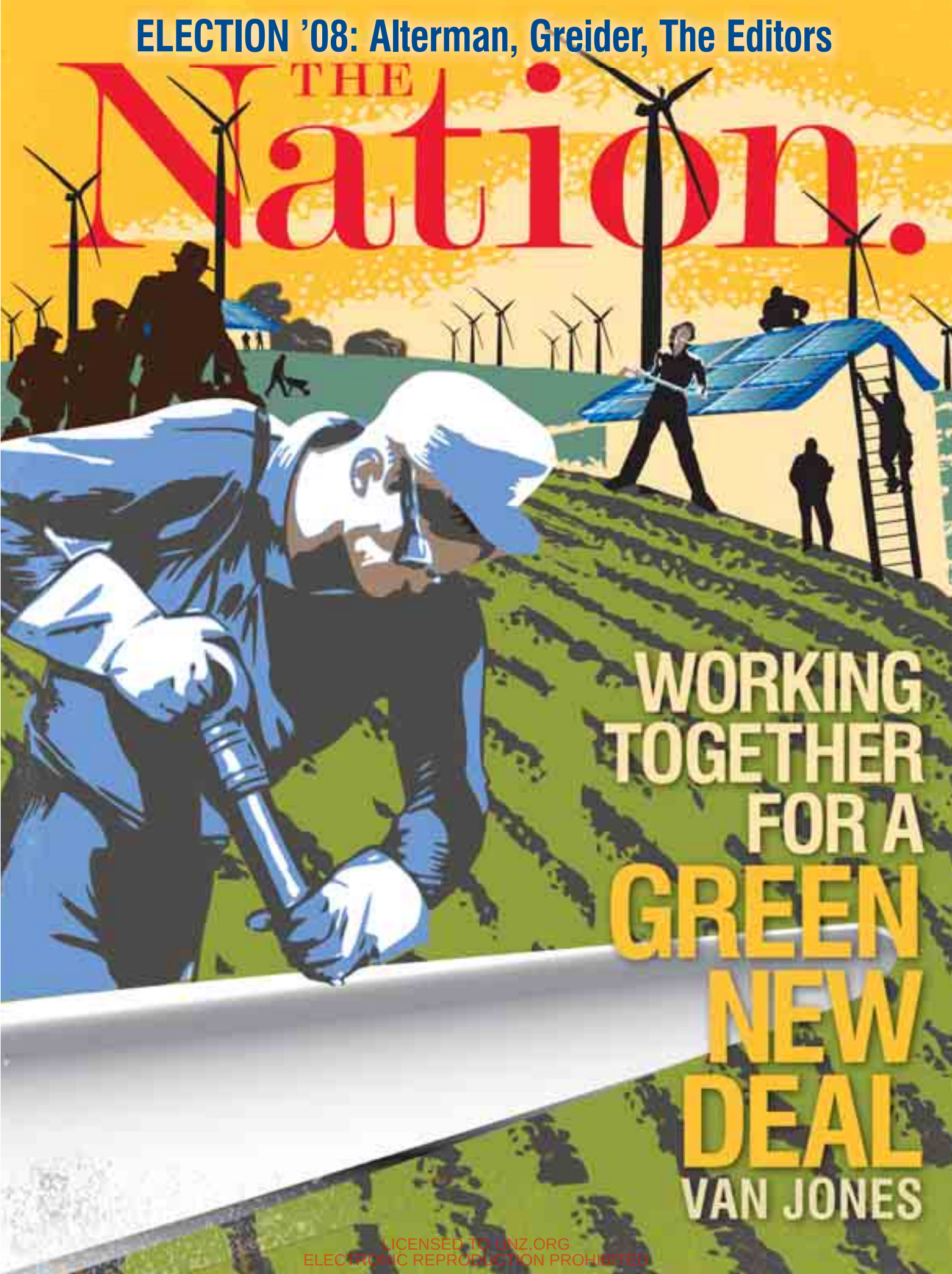
ELECTION '08: Alterman, Greider, The Editors

THE Nation.



WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREEN NEW DEAL

VAN JONES

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Letters

China's Confucian Revival

Dent, Minn.
Orville Schell is at it again! In "China's Quest for Moral Authority" [Oct. 20] he claims that China needs to heal itself from centuries of foreign "humiliation." The anodyne is a revival of Confucian tradition: "China's current attention to Confucianism suggests that the Chinese…have begun to feel the moral void from which their government operates."

There are two problems with this:

1. It is not the Chinese people who are urging the revival of Confucianism. The Confucian institutes spreading throughout the world are under the auspices of the Foreign Ministry—not the initiative of private, locally based educational institutions.

Throughout Chinese history, the government has tried to enforce its legitimacy by making Confucius into an imperial icon. Beginning in the nineteenth century Confucian temples were erected. Confucius' birthday was celebrated in September. In a recent upgrade, the birthday party included a dance once reserved for the emperor.

2. Confucianism has joined the revival of Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. By being used to serve the state's policy of transforming past resentments into an ideology of moral equivalency with the West, Confucianism has lost its dynamism. The government has enforced guidelines on the limits of the interpretation of Confucian tradition. Beijing has replaced the Maoist dictum "The East is Red" with the exaltation that Confucian "harmony" (*ho*) will lead China and the world to a purer community. In sum, China's Confucianism for export is just tradition redux and is inimical to the creation of a moral authority.
Richard C. Kagan

Cincinnati
Orville Schell's article is very inspiring. However, he misplaced a couple of Confucius' sayings. It was in Book VII of his Analects, not in the Works of Mencius, that the Master said, "Riches and honors without justice are to me as fleeting clouds." And it was in Book III of Mencius, not the Analects, that we find "The moral power of a Junzi is like the wind, while the moral power of the common people is like the grass. When blown, the grass cannot but bend before the wind."
Richard Low

letters@thenation.com

Schell Replies

Beijing
If "Schell is at it again," one is left to wonder what Schell's former violations of Richard Kagan's delicate sensitivities may have been. Because one points out China's new yearning for a more ethical basis for living, this hardly makes that person a raging neo-Confucian evangelist. (Although I can think of worse things for which to be denounced, and I do find the Sage's teachings a step up from Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong Thought.)

Yes, having tried to debunk Confucius during its Maoist revolution, the Communist Party is now trying to revive it, and it does sometimes look like something of a state-sponsored palliative for the spiritual malaise that hovers over China. But ordinary Chinese themselves are showing a renewed fascination with Confucius, buying books on Confucian thought, enjoying TV programs on Confucian philosophy and even reading the Four Books in classical Chinese. So the movement is a top-down and bottom-up affair, not simply something foisted on people from on high.

And, yes, Confucianism has lost much of its dynamism over the last century, but that does not stop many from yearning for a little cultural succor from the past to fill the void left by the nihilism of Mao's revolution and then Deng Xiaoping's market-driven counterrevolution.

China has to turn someplace for renewed ethical, spiritual and cultural balance. Indeed, it is turning in many directions, to Christianity, Buddhism, Falungongism, Islam, Taoism and other crypto-traditional cults. Each has won many converts.

The point is this: as China continues its relentless course of self-reinvention, many Chinese are beginning to seek more than material wealth. Having had periods in

(continued on page 24)

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Why We Vote

This past week, a flier of unknown origin was circulated in Hampton Roads, Virginia, bearing the seal of the state Board of Elections and instructing Democrats that, because of an emergency order of the state General Assembly, they were to vote on November 5… the day *after* election day. Across the country GOP lawyers are working overtime to erect barriers to keep people from voting, and the McCain campaign and its surrogates have spent weeks smearing ACORN for engaging in the audacious and outrageous act of… registering poor people. That the group submitted 400,000 registrations that were flawed—making the total more like 900,000 than the oft-cited 1.3 million—should not overshadow the fact that it has been part of a much larger and apparently effective drive to expand the electorate. So as we (finally) approach election day, we find ourselves in a familiar situation: the left wants the maximum number of eligible citizens to vote, and the right does not.

EDITORIAL

Progressives have long stood for a wider franchise that includes the propertyless, women, African-Americans and young adults. The same is not true of conservatives: from Edmund Burke, who worried about the "cruel oppressions" the many have-nots might visit upon the few haves, to activist Paul Weyrich, who admitted in 1980 that "I don't want everybody to vote.… As a matter of fact, our leverage in the elections, quite candidly, goes up as the voting populace goes down."

For several decades, starting around 1964, conservatives were winning this battle. Turnout declined from 63 percent in 1960 to just over 51 percent in 2000. Last election we witnessed enough of an increase to detect the rumblings of a reawakening. Now we appear to be in the midst of a full-fledged democratic renaissance. By every measure—from the number of small donors and volunteers to the number of those who cast their votes early—participation is at its highest level in a generation.

Particularly poignant is the role black voters are poised to play as they head to the polls. All across the South, men and women once barred from the ballot—forced to brave dogs, insults and terrorism simply to add their names to the voting rolls—will, on November 4, be able to cast their ballot for an African-American man to be president of the United States. Imagine the emotion of 109-year-old Amanda Jones, whose father was born into slavery, when she voted early this year in Texas.

Along with the ugliness, this election has produced a tremendous number of grace notes: the recent report of employees at an Indiana call center walking out rather than read anti-Obama talking points; the McCain supporters who confronted and shunned an Islamophobe outside a rally (captured on YouTube); and the story (reported on *Politico*) of how a McCain backer in line to vote early in Hamilton County, Florida, lent his NASCAR jacket to three elderly Jewish women after overhearing that they would not be allowed to enter the polling place wearing their Obama gear. While chatting with the women, who spoke of the alliance of Jews and blacks during the civil rights struggle, the man was seized with the desire to be on the right side of history; when it was time for him to cast his ballot, he voted for Obama as well.

This last story gets at something profound about why we go to the trouble of voting. We vote in order to change the country, to exercise our rights, to make our voices heard and a hundred other clichés as shopworn as they are true. But we also vote because it places us in direct fellowship with other citizens; we vote because it is a secular sacrament, an act of civic solidarity. Because it is the ultimate declaration that we are, indeed, all in this together.

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The Marathon Man

Ralph Nader is a man of political substance trapped in an era of easy lies. He pierces the fog of propaganda with hard facts and reason, but the smoke rolls over him and he disappears from public view. A lesser man might go crazy or give up. Nader instead runs for president again, as he is doing this year, campaigning in fifty states and addressing crowds wherever he finds them, smaller crowds this time but still eager to feed on his idealism. Ralph is not delusional. He knows the story. He is stubborn about the facts and honest with himself.

COMMENT

"I believe in I.F. Stone's dictum that, in all social justice movements, you've got to be ready to lose. And lose and lose and lose. It's not very pleasant, but you have to accept this if you believe in what you're doing," Nader explains.

He was conducting a "newsmaker" press conference at the National Press Club in Washington on October 24, before moving on to Massachusetts, where he delivered twenty-one speeches on twenty-one topics in twenty-one municipalities in one day, in hopes of earning a place in the *Guinness Book of World Records*. Five or six reporters showed up at the Press Club event (including several old admirers). The only cameraman was a documentary filmmaker. Nader stood at the podium and described the corporate dominance of politics, the stranglehold exercised on dissent by the two-party system, the packaging of presidential candidates like soap or cars and the failure of left-liberal progressives (including *The Nation*) to demand conditions on their support for the Democratic candidate.

"The hypocrisy of liberals, which may in some ways be unconscious, is empowering the forces that are destroying our nation," Nader asserted in an even-tempered voice. "The left in this country has been successfully cowed by the Democratic Party," he continued. "The votes of progressives are taken for granted by Democrats…. By allowing ourselves to be manipulated, we have demonstrated that we have no moral substance. We have no line that can never be crossed, no stance so sacred and important that we are willing to stand up and fight back." So long as progressives are willing to settle for the "least-worst" alternative, they will remain ignored and excluded from power, he suggested.

This kind of talk from Nader drives some people to rage against him. His strategy, critics observe, was flawed and lacked the follow-through to build a movement. Nader returns their scorn by discussing "the rage that many in our nation feel toward liberals." Barack Obama, he insists, does not intend to alter anything fundamental about the causes. "This rage is a legitimate expression of very real betrayal," Nader explained. "The working class, most of whom do not vote, watch Democratic candidate after Democratic candidate run for office promising to support labor and protect jobs and then, once elected, trot off to Washington to pass the corporate-friendly legislation drawn up by the 35,000 lobbyists who work for our shadow government."

Whatever you think of Nader's jeremiad, it is exceedingly timely. Democrats are on the brink of losing their old excuses for timidity and retreat. If the election produces stronger majorities in Congress and a president who has promised big

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change, Nader's analysis will be tested in the clearest terms. For the first time in thirty years, the Dems will have nobody left to blame. If Obama does not turn the page as he promised, if a Democratic Congress does not step up forcefully, then we may fairly conclude Nader was right. The decay of democracy will have been proven to be deeper than we wished to believe.

Nader is not optimistic about how the old Democratic coalition will respond to its new situation. "I see a lot of anger around the country, but I don't see it organized," he said. "Anger that's unorganized has no power." The rationale behind his serial campaigns for president was always about this vacuum. His conviction was that third-party campaigns could help mobilize a popular counterforce to leverage the Democrats and break up the two-party monopoly. He failed in this—for many reasons, as he frankly acknowledges.

"The question usually asked," he said, "is, Has there been a pull or a push on either political party? I'm sorry to say there hasn't been any indicator of that—which to me means people's resignation to politics as usual has deepened further." Both major parties are deeply skewed in their allegiances to corporate power, and Nader believes this unnatural condition must be altered to reverse the decline and decay of society. He thinks this will happen sooner or later, but probably not in the way he has approached it. "My personal preference is a grassroots movement," he said. "But more likely it's going to be some billionaire—a progressive or liberal billionaire who makes it a three-way race. If people get used to voting outside the two parties, then things can change."

So what did his presidential candidacy accomplish? Nader offered a modest list. His presence encouraged others to run independently for public office and showed them ways to do it. He identified the many barriers to ballot access for third-party candidates as an important civil liberties issue. He brought young people into clean politics and helped them develop their skills. What else? "We kept the progressive agenda alive for the future." WILLIAM GREIDER

We're All Minskyites Now

As the most severe financial crisis since the 1930s Depression has unfolded over the past eighteen months, the ideas of the late economist Hyman Minsky have suddenly come into fashion. In the summer of 2007, the *Wall Street Journal* ran a front-page article describing the emerging crisis as the financial market's "Minsky moment." His ideas have since been featured in the *Financial Times*, *BusinessWeek*

Noted.

PARDONS FOR TURKEYS: As **George W. Bush** makes the transition from a lawless presidency to the redoubt of history, he still has a final round of high crimes and misdemeanors in him. Specifically, count on Bush to try to pardon the unpardonable—like **Karl Rove**, **Harriet Miers** and others with whom he likely conspired to thwart the rule of law. His defenders will say Bush's pardon powers are limitless. In fact, they are not.

The founders of the American experiment were clear on the question of what should be done if a president abuses his privilege to pardon an associate. **James Madison**, "the father of the Constitution," argued, "[If] the President be connected, in any suspicious manner, with any person, and there be grounds to believe he will shelter him, the House of Representatives can impeach him; they can remove him if found guilty." Madison's Virginia compatriot **George Mason** was similarly concerned about misuse of the pardon power. "The father of the Bill of Rights" feared that a future president might attempt to shield himself by preventing the prosecution or jailing of an aide who could testify to the president's involvement in a high crime or misdemeanor. Mason observed that impeachment would surely be in order if a president attempted "to stop inquiry and prevent detection" of wrongdoing within his administration. Mason also believed that impeachment would be in order if a president were to "pardon crimes which were advised by himself."

Should Bush pardon Rove and Miers—the subjects of incomplete Congressional inquiries into gross wrongdoing—the House Judiciary Committee would be duty bound to demand that the president explain himself, as then-President **Gerald Ford** did regarding his 1974 pardon of **Richard Nixon**. If Bush refuses, any self-serving pardons should be challenged as the founders intended—with articles of impeachment. JOHN NICHOLS

DISHONORABLE CHARGES: On November 10, the day before Veterans Day, ten members of **Iraq Veterans Against the War** (IVAW) will be in court. The vets were arrested and charged with disorderly conduct while demonstrating outside the last presidential debate, held at Hofstra University on October 15. One of them, **Nick Morgan**, was trampled by a police horse and has had to undergo extensive surgery.

Before the debate, IVAW members asked **CBS News** if they could pose two questions to the candidates—on veterans' healthcare and Iraq War resisters. They received no response. In their request and a subsequent meeting with Nassau County police, IVAW members detailed their plans to hold nonviolent demonstrations: a large contingent would march, and a few members willing to risk arrest would attempt to cross police lines. Morgan was among those not baiting arrest when a mounted police officer rushed the sidewalk where he was standing. He was put in handcuffs while still unconscious. Police accompanied him to the hospital and later took him to jail, where they taunted him.

Morgan is pursuing a civil suit against the Nassau County police, and IVAW is demanding charges against him be dropped and an apology issued. Members are also urging supporters to contact both presidential campaigns and demand that the candidates answer the questions left out of the debate. SARAH H. ARNOLD

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and *The New Yorker*, among many other outlets. Minsky, who spent most of his academic career at Washington University in St. Louis and remained professionally active until his death, in 1996, deserves the recognition. He was his generation's most insightful analyst of financial markets and the causes of financial crises.

COMMENT

Even so, most mainstream economists have shunned his work because it emerged out of a dissident left Keynesian tradition known in economists' circles as post-Keynesianism. Minsky's writings, and the post-Keynesian tradition more generally, are highly critical of free-market capitalism and its defenders in the economics profession—among them Milton Friedman and other Nobel Prize–winning economists who for a generation have claimed to "prove," usually through elaborate mathematical models, that unregulated markets are inherently rational, stable and fair. For Friedmanites, regulations are harmful most of the time.

Minsky, by contrast, explained throughout his voluminous writings that unregulated markets will always produce instability and crises. He alternately termed his approach "the financial instability hypothesis" and "the Wall Street paradigm."

For Minsky, the key to understanding financial instability is to trace the shifts that occur in investors' psychology as the economy moves out of a period of crisis and recession (or depression) and into a phase of rising profits and growth. Coming out of a crisis, investors will tend to be cautious, since many of them will have been clobbered during the just-ended recession. For example, they will hold large cash reserves as a cushion to protect against future crises.

But as the economy emerges from its slump and profits rise, investors' expectations become increasingly positive. They become eager to pursue risky ideas such as securitized subprime mortgage loans. They also become more willing to let their cash reserves dwindle, since idle cash earns no profits, while purchasing speculative vehicles like subprime mortgage securities that can produce returns of 10 percent or higher.

But these moves also mean that investors are weakening their defenses against the next downturn. This is why, in Minsky's view, economic upswings, proceeding without regulations, inevitably encourage speculative excesses in which financial bubbles emerge. Minsky explained that in an unregulated environment, the only way to stop bubbles is to let them burst. Financial markets then fall into a crisis, and a recession or depression ensues.

Here we reach one of Minsky's crucial insights—that financial crises and recessions actually serve a purpose in the operations of a free-market economy, even while they wreak havoc with people's lives, including those of tens of millions of innocents who never invest a dime on Wall Street. Minsky's point is that without crises, a free-market economy has no way of discouraging investors' natural proclivities toward ever greater risks in pursuit of ever higher profits.

However, in the wake of the calamitous Great Depression, Keynesian economists tried to design measures that could supplant financial crises as the system's "natural" regulator. This was the context in which the post–World War II system of big-government capitalism was created. The package included two basic elements: regulations designed to limit speculation and channel financial resources into socially useful investments, such as single-family housing; and government bailout operations to prevent 1930s-style depressions when crises broke out anyway.

Minsky argues that the system of regulations and the bailout operations were largely successful. That is why from the end of World War II to the mid-1970s, markets here and abroad were much more stable than in any previous historical period. But even during the New Deal years, financial market titans were fighting vehemently to eliminate, or at least defang, the regulations. By the 1970s, almost all politicians—Democrats and Republicans alike—had become compliant. The regulations were initially weakened, then abolished altogether, under the strong guidance of, among others, Federal Reserve chair Alan Greenspan, Republican Senator Phil Gramm and Clinton Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin.

For Minsky, the consequences were predictable. Consider the scorecard over the twenty years before the current disaster: a stock market crash in 1987; the savings-and-loan crisis and bailout in 1989-90; the "emerging markets" crisis of 1997-98—which brought down, among others, Long-Term Capital Management, the super–hedge fund led by two Nobel laureates specializing in finance—and the bursting of the dot-com market bubble in 2001. Each of these crises could easily have produced a 1930s-style collapse in the absence of full-scale government bailout operations.

Here we come to another of Minsky's major insights—that in the absence of a complementary regulatory system, the effectiveness of bailouts will diminish over time. This is because bailouts, just like financial crises, are double-edged. They prevent depressions, but they also limit the costs to speculators of their financial excesses. As soon as the next economic expansion begins gathering strength, speculators will therefore pursue

Calvin Trillin, Deadline Poet

Sarah Palin's Bubble Deflates Just as Her Clothing Bills Arrive

A first it seemed daring—a bold McCain stroke.
His choice of Ms. Palin proved he'd go for broke.
Conservatives loved her. She held them in thrall.
They thought, "This McCain's not so bad after all."
Because of that start it's now hard to believe a
McCain camp lieutenant would call her a diva.
That's politics, which isn't beanbag or cricket.
And now there's no doubt she's a drag on the ticket.
They dressed her all up. They could dress her in Prada,
But what she can say that's of substance is nada.
Folks say it was reckless, considering oldness,
For John to pick Sarah. Well, so much for boldness.

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profit opportunities more or less as they had during the previous cycle. This is the pattern that has brought us to our current situation—a massive global crisis, being countered by an equally massive bailout of thus far limited effectiveness.

Minsky's Wall Street paradigm did not address all the afflictions of free-market capitalism. In particular, his model neglects the problems that arise from the vast disparities of income, wealth and power that are just as endemic to free-market capitalism as are its tendencies toward financial instability, even though he fully recognized that these problems exist.

Yet Minsky's approach still provides the most powerful lens for understanding the roots of financial instability and developing an effective regulatory system.

Minsky understood that his advocacy of comprehensive financial regulations made no sense whatsoever within the prevailing professional orthodoxy of free-market cheerleading. In his 1986 magnum opus, *Stabilizing an Unstable Economy*, he concluded that "the policy failures since the mid-1960s are related to the banality of orthodox economic analysis.... Only an economics that is critical of capitalism can be a guide to successful policy for capitalism." ROBERT POLLIN

Robert Pollin is a professor of economics and co-director of the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts. His books include New Perspectives in Monetary Macroeconomics: Explorations in the Tradition of Hyman P. Minsky, *which he co-edited.*

Wanted: A Climate Bailout

What a difference an emergency makes. Scare people enough and $700 billion can materialize almost overnight. The White House can repudiate its core economic philosophy—government should leave markets alone—within hours. Congress, where spending bills sometimes wait years to reach the floor, can pass one of the costliest laws in its history within days. Even the endlessly fickle media can provide 24/7 news coverage, making the emergency the topic on everyone's mind.

COMMENT

When will we see this same sense of urgency devoted to the greatest emergency of our time? You wouldn't know it from our politicians or TV shows, but the climate crisis is even more serious than the financial crisis. The financial crisis, while painful and severe, can be resolved, given time and wise policies. The climate crisis, not so. The earth's climate system has tipping points beyond which no return is possible. Yet there is a very real danger right now that sliding oil prices will lull the public into an even deeper complacency.

The system passed the first major tipping point twenty years ago, when, according to 1988 Congressional testimony from James Hansen, the chief climate scientist at NASA, man-made global warming began. A second tipping point was passed a few years ago, when global warming began triggering climate change: abnormal droughts, storms and other extreme weather. The problem is, once climate change begins, it cannot simply be turned off. The inertia of the climate system ensures that even if every country in the world went green as quickly as possible, the earth would still be locked into fifty more years of rising temperatures and the impacts they unleash. Thus, by 2050 European summer temperatures will routinely reach the record highs experienced in 2003, when an estimated 70,000 people died. The snowpacks atop many of the world's mountains—a source of drinking and irrigation water for more than a billion people—will have melted and shrunk. Sea levels will be rising significantly.

We are now in danger of passing a third tipping point—the descent into cataclysmic, irreversible climate change. Hansen returned to Capitol Hill in June, on the twentieth anniversary of his 1988 testimony, to warn that the earth is on the verge of "disastrous climate changes that spiral dynamically out of humanity's control," causing "mass extinction, ecosystem collapse and dramatic sea level rises." To avert this catastrophe, Hansen continued, "is, barely, still possible. It requires a transformative change of direction in Washington in the next year"—that is, by the end of 2009, when the world's governments will meet in Copenhagen to negotiate new reductions in the greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming.

Every candidate running for election, and every journalist covering them, should be required to spend the twenty minutes it takes to read Hansen's latest testimony, because they obviously still don't get it. We face a code-red emergency. At stake is the survival of human civilization. Yet the candidates and media treat global warming as just another issue. Even Barack Obama, who takes the problem seriously, seems not to grasp the urgency of the moment. (The same is true in Europe, where governments have invoked the economic downturn as grounds for delaying emissions cuts.)

The United States and the world need to launch a climate rescue plan that is at least as ambitious as the financial rescue plan. We need a massive shift of government incentives and funds away from fossil fuels and toward energy efficiency, solar and wind power, and other low-carbon alternatives. We must also end rampant deforestation, which causes 20 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions while imposing enormous economic costs. (A new study by the European Union found that deforestation costs far more every year than the financial crisis, because when forests disappear humans must pay for ecosystem services—storage of water, neutralization of carbon dioxide—that previously were free.)

The good news is that a massive green jobs and investment program is economically appealing and politically plausible. The program would pay for itself over time by generating additional income, profits, innovation and market opportunities, which doubtless accounts for the support it has gained from such mainstream sources as *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman, not to mention the Democratic presidential nominee. A green jobs and investment program is the core of Obama's proposed energy policy as president, but he is still thinking too small: he proposes spending $15 billion a year for the next ten years, when the crisis calls for spending much more, much faster.

Friends of the Earth was the first environmental group to oppose the $700 billion bailout, warning that it would put the next president "in a fiscal straitjacket." But a straitjacketed Obama should still spend big to go green, says Friends of the

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Earth president Brent Blackwelder. "There is enormous public support for it, and it's what the climate requires." It's also what the economy requires: with a recession/depression threatening the global economy, deficit spending is the least of our worries. Only massive pump-priming through well-targeted government spending can protect jobs and living standards and stimulate an eventual recovery. Take a lesson from the Wall Street bailout, adds Blackwelder; a climate rescue plan must not reward the same bad actors that got us into this mess. Just as the financial crisis stems from investment firms exploiting insufficient government regulation, so the climate crisis stems from energy corporations blocking regulation of greenhouse gas emissions, in part by misrepresenting the science of global warming. In his recent testimony, Hansen declared that the CEOs of fossil energy corporations "should be tried for high crimes against humanity and nature," adding that he welcomed the chance to testify. In the meantime, let's at least strip those CEOs of their de facto veto power over government policy. Otherwise, the green revolution—our best hope against impending climate chaos—will come late or not at all.

MARK HERTSGAARD

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Vermont v. Bush

COMMENT

Republican Calvin Coolidge visited Vermont eighty years ago this fall to deliver one of the last speeches of his presidency, a paean to his native state in which he predicted, "If the spirit of liberty should vanish in other parts of the Union and support of our institutions should languish, it could all be replenished from the generous store held by the people of this brave little state of Vermont." Vermonters appreciated the line so much that they inscribed it on their statehouse.

Across the dark interregnum of another Republican presidency, Vermonters have done their best to use the state's institutions to battle the assaults on constitutional governance that have been the hallmarks of George W. Bush's administration. Vermont communities passed resolutions opposing Bush's rush to war in Iraq, calling for an investigation of the use of the state's National Guard units in the conflict and ultimately urging immediate withdrawal of all US troops. Cities and towns passed resolutions opposing the excesses of the Patriot Act and related assaults on privacy, as did the Vermont General Assembly. When all else failed, forty Vermont towns passed resolutions proposing impeachment of the president, and the Vermont Senate petitioned Congress to take action.

As Bush prepares to exit the White House—with the Iraq War ongoing and impeachment taken "off the table" by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi—activists in the brave little state are not satisfied to let a lawless president simply hightail it home to Texas. Enter Charlotte Dennett, muckraking author of books and articles detailing environmental destruction caused by Big Oil companies; National Writers Union activist; and practicing attorney from Cambridge, Vermont—population 3,186. Running for state attorney general on the ticket of Vermont's feisty Progressive Party—which holds a half-dozen legislative seats and a statewide ballot line—Dennett declares, "The Office of Attorney General allows me to combine my investigative skills with my legal powers in order to put these skills to work for you. As the state's top lawyer, I will prosecute those who willfully break the law. I believe that no one, not even the President of the United States, is above the law." That's not just campaign rhetoric. If she wins her uphill race, Dennett proposes to appoint Vincent Bugliosi, the man who put Charles Manson in jail during a career in which he successfully tried twenty-one murder cases, as a state special prosecutor charged with bringing Bush to justice.

Dennett takes her inspiration from Bugliosi's bestselling book *The Prosecution of George W. Bush for Murder*, in which the lawyer argues that it is within the jurisdiction of any state attorney general to charge the president with murder because Bush lied about the threat posed by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in speeches that were broadcast in every state and then engaged in "overt acts" to recruit residents of those states to fight and die in his war. With Bugliosi campaigning at her side before the election, Dennett argues that Vermont is uniquely suited to take the lead in prosecuting Bush, since the state has had more soldiers killed in Iraq per capita than any other and since Vermonters have so clearly expressed their objections to his actions. "Vermonters pay a huge amount of money and a disproportionate share of soldiers' lives in this illegal war," she explains. "If our elected representatives will not act to hold President Bush accountable, it is up to us to use this final remaining tool."

Dennett's crusade drew a rebuke from the Republican National Committee, which claimed she was more concerned with "radical left-wing provocation than upholding the law of Vermont." And the incumbent attorney general she is challenging, Democrat William Sorrell, argues that for a state attorney general to have the authority to mount such a prosecution, the murder would have to have taken place in his or her jurisdiction. Since Vermont "is still the only state George Bush has not visited while president," Sorrell suggests, the campaign mounted by Dennett and Bugliosi amounts to little more than "good political sound bites." But Lawrence Velvel, dean of the Massachusetts School of Law, defends Bugliosi's book as "a very serious work by a very serious author" and suggests that the potential "to use state murder statutes to punish presidential murder" ought not to be dismissed casually. Prominent Vermonters, including ice-cream entrepreneurs Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield, have helped Dennett raise enough money to buy some television ads in the closing days of the campaign.

The refreshing thing about Dennett's candidacy, no matter how many votes she receives and no matter what one thinks about trying a president for murder, is its reminder that campaigns can still be about ideas—big, bold, even dangerous ideas that unsettle the powerful. It is good, as well, to know that the brave little state of Vermont is still living up to Coolidge's charge.

JOHN NICHOLS

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Eric Alterman

A Liberal Supermajority (Finally) Finds Its Voice

Readers of the *Washington Post* woke up one recent Friday morning to a remarkable juxtaposition of two ostensibly unrelated articles. The first was a news analysis titled The End of American Capitalism?, which heralded the apparent demise of laissez-faire as the intellectual underpinning of the nation's economic system. In the same paper was another story: Anger Is Crowd's Overarching Emotion at McCain Rally, which described a John McCain event characterized by hysterical crowd attacks on Barack Obama as an ally of terrorists, a "socialist" and other angry epithets. By coincidence, the thread that connected these two disparate stories could be found that morning in the *New York Times*, in an implicitly self-critical column by David Brooks. He wrote:

> Modern conservatism began as a movement of dissident intellectuals.... Driven by a need to engage elite opinion, conservatives tried to build an intellectual counterestablishment with think tanks and magazines. They disdained the ideas of the liberal professoriate, but they did not disdain the idea of a cultivated mind.... But over the past few decades, the Republican Party has driven away people who live in cities, in highly educated regions and on the coasts.... What had been a disdain for liberal intellectuals slipped into a disdain for the educated class as a whole.

Brooks—a nearly perfect product of the right-wingers' long-term investment in the fertilization of the conservative imagination, having done stints at the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page and *The Weekly Standard* before being invited to the *Times* and PBS's *NewsHour*—was unwittingly explaining the connection between the collapse of Friedmanite capitalism and the mindless fury of the Republican base. The upshot is that conservatives, having fed at the trough of power for the better part of three decades, are out of ideas and have targeted their appeal to a coterie of Americans remarkably similar to the minority coalition enjoyed by Barry Goldwater in 1964, with an angry, retrograde message that harks back to Joe McCarthy. McCain's baffling, fumbling performances at the presidential debates reflect this confusion. He didn't know whether to attack Obama or defend what remains of his reputation. Pathetically, he ended up accomplishing neither.

Liberals and progressives, however, are in the opposite position. Obama has proven an inspirational messenger, speaking to and for a public eager to embrace the kind of politics that has been demonized and trivialized for the past eight years by mainstream media desperate to deflect the right's accusations of "liberal bias." According to the Pew Center's extensive national survey, released well before this endless election got under way, roughly 70 percent of respondents believe that the government has a responsibility "to take care of people who can't take care of themselves." Two-thirds (66 percent)—including most of those who say they would prefer a smaller government (57 percent)—support government-funded health insurance for all citizens. Most also regard the nation's corporations as too powerful, while nearly two-thirds (65 percent) say corporate profits are too high—about the same number who say "labor unions are necessary to protect the working person" (68 percent). When it comes to the environment, a large majority (83 percent) back stricter laws and regulations, while 69 percent agree "we should put more emphasis on fuel conservation than on developing new oil supplies" and 60 percent say they would "be willing to pay higher prices in order to protect the environment."

Yet the MSM—with precious few exceptions—remain wedded to right-wing assumptions long since discredited by reality. We don't need to look at extremes like the infamous performance of ABC's George Stephanopoulos and Charles Gibson in the Clinton-Obama debate in January—one that may possibly have cost that network any hope of participating in the general election debates. Just examine the thrust of the questions asked during the Obama-McCain contests. Even absent distractions like lapel pins and preacher politics, virtually all questions regarding the financial crisis assumed that the meltdown calls for a drastic reduction in public investment—as if Keynesianism, rather than Friedmanite economics, were somehow at fault. And why was just about every foreign policy question predicated on the alleged efficacy of neocon-style threats of the use of force? Where were the questions about the need for collective action to combat climate change? Where were the debates about the causes and effects of the global migration and food crises? Why did we hear not a single inquiry about the challenges to labor and environmental standards arising from the billion or so workers in China, India and elsewhere, who stand ready to displace millions of Americans in our increasingly globalized workplace? And where were the questions about torture, wiretapping US citizens and restoring respect for our Constitution?

In a wonderfully apoplectic editorial titled A Liberal Supermajority, frightened *Journal* editors worried that an Obama landslide could presage "one of the most profound political and ideological shifts in U.S. history. Liberals would dominate the entire government in a way they haven't since 1965, or 1933." Among the coming horrors: "Medicare for all...[a] green revolution...national, election-day voter registration... the end of Guantanamo and military commissions...'net neutrality' rules...."

America's liberal supermajority has watched as its country has been degraded and dishonored for the past eight years while many in the MSM have either cheered, acquiesced or looked the other way. If you ask me, the pundit with the greatest gift for political prophecy right now is the late, great Sam Cooke: "It's been a long, long time coming, but I know a change is [finally] going to come." ■

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Naomi Klein

The Bailout: Bush's Final Pillage

In the final days of the election, many Republicans seem to have given up the fight for power. But that doesn't mean they are relaxing. If you want to see real Republican elbow grease, check out the energy going into chucking great chunks of the $700 billion bailout out the door. At a recent Senate Banking Committee hearing, Republican Senator Bob Corker was fixated on this task, and with a clear deadline in mind: inauguration. "How much of it do you think may be actually spent by January 20 or so?" Corker asked Neel Kashkari, the 35-year-old former banker in charge of the bailout.

When European colonialists realized that they had no choice but to hand over power to the indigenous citizens, they would often turn their attention to stripping the local treasury of its gold and grabbing valuable livestock. If they were really nasty, like the Portuguese in Mozambique in the mid-1970s, they poured concrete down the elevator shafts.

The Bush gang prefers bureaucratic instruments: "distressed asset" auctions and the "equity purchase program." But make no mistake: the goal is the same as it was for the defeated Portuguese—a final frantic looting of the public wealth before they hand over the keys to the safe.

How else to make sense of the bizarre decisions that have governed the allocation of the bailout money? When the Bush administration announced it would be injecting $250 billion into America's banks in exchange for equity, the plan was widely referred to as "partial nationalization"—a radical measure required to get the banks lending again. In fact, there has been no nationalization, partial or otherwise. Taxpayers have gained no meaningful control, which is why the banks can spend their windfall as they wish (on bonuses, mergers, savings…) and the government is reduced to pleading that they use a portion of it for loans.

What, then, is the real purpose of the bailout? I fear it is something much more ambitious than a one-off gift to big business—that this bailout has been designed to keep pillaging the Treasury for years to come. Remember, the main concern among big market players, particularly banks, is not the lack of credit but their battered share prices. Investors have lost confidence in the banks' honesty, and with good reason. This is where Treasury's equity pays off big time.

By purchasing stakes in these institutions, Treasury is sending a signal to the market that they are a safe bet. Why safe? Because the government won't be able to afford to let them fail. If these companies get themselves into trouble, investors can assume that the government will keep finding more cash, since allowing them to go down would mean losing its initial equity investments (just look at AIG). That tethering of the public interest to private companies is the real purpose of the bailout plan: Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson is handing all the companies that are admitted to the program—a number potentially in the thousands—an implicit Treasury Department guarantee. To skittish investors looking for safe places to park their money, these equity deals will be even more comforting than a Triple-A rating from Moody's.

Insurance like that is priceless. But for the banks, the best part is that the government is paying them—in some cases billions of dollars—to accept its seal of approval. For taxpayers, on the other hand, this entire plan is extremely risky, and may well cost significantly more than Paulson's original idea of buying up $700 billion in toxic debts. Now taxpayers aren't just on the hook for the debts but, arguably, for the fate of every corporation that sells them equity.

Interestingly, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac both enjoyed this kind of unspoken guarantee. For decades the market understood that, since these private players were enmeshed with the government, Uncle Sam would always save the day. It was the worst of all worlds. Not only were profits privatized while risks were socialized but the implicit government backing created powerful incentives for reckless investments.

Now, with the new equity purchase program, Paulson has taken the discredited Fannie and Freddie model and applied it to a huge swath of the private banking industry. And once again, there is no reason to shy away from risky bets—especially since Treasury has not required the banks to give up high-risk financial instruments in exchange for taxpayer dollars.

To further boost confidence, the federal government has also unveiled unlimited public guarantees for many bank deposit accounts. Oh, and as if this wasn't enough, Treasury has been encouraging the banks to merge with one another, ensuring that the only institutions left standing will be "too big to fail." In three different ways, the market is being told loud and clear that Washington will not allow the country's financial institutions to bear the consequences of their behavior. This may well be Bush's most creative innovation: no-risk capitalism.

There is a glimmer of hope. In answer to Senator Corker's question, Treasury is indeed having trouble dispersing the bailout funds. It has requested about $350 billion of the $700 billion, but most of this hasn't yet made it out the door. Meanwhile, every day it becomes clearer that the bailout was sold on false pretenses. It was never about getting loans flowing. It was always about turning the state into a giant insurance agency for Wall Street—a safety net for the people who need it least, subsidized by the people who need it most.

This grotesque duplicity is an opportunity. Whoever wins the election on November 4 will have enormous moral authority. It can be used to call for a freeze on the dispersal of bailout funds—not after the inauguration, but right away. All deals should be renegotiated immediately, this time with the public getting the guarantees.

It is risky, of course, to interrupt the bailout. The market won't like it. Nothing could be riskier, however, than allowing the Bush gang their parting gift to big business—the gift that will keep on taking. ■

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WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREEN NEW DEAL

Wise, compassionate forces from civil society must join green business to change our politics.

by VAN JONES

My background is in the struggles for racial justice and criminal justice reform. As such, I've always felt an affinity for Cinque, the hero of the slave-revolt movie *Amistad*. In that film, based on a true story, the righteous, enslaved Africans fight back and take over the slave ship.

The people at the bottom rise up—taking their destiny into their own hands. It's really a metaphor for the last century's version of racial politics. The slave ship is earth, the white slavers are the world's oppressors and the African captives are the world's oppressed. The point is for the oppressed to confront and defeat their oppressors. I took that as my mission and spent years fighting against superjails, rogue cops, the prison lobby—against the forces that, to my mind and the minds of many, are the slavers of today.

Yet at a certain point it occurred to me that what we need is less investment in the fight *against* and more energy in the fight *for*: for positive alternatives to violence and incarceration. It was around that time that I got involved in the environmental movement. And I came to understand that the answer to our social, economic and ecological crises can be one and the same: a green economy strong enough to lift people out of poverty.

Society faces some huge challenges. The individuals, entrepreneurs and community leaders who will step up to make the repairs and changes are going to need help. They require and deserve a world-class partner in our government. The time has come for a public-private community partnership to fix this country and put it back to work. In the framework of a Green New Deal, the government would become a powerful partner to the problem solvers of the world—and not the problem makers.

Now, we cannot achieve the goal of a Green New Deal just by wishing for it. The first step in getting the government to support an inclusive, green economy is to build a durable political coalition.

On the one hand, there are large and powerful constituencies of white, affluent, college-educated progressives active in the United States. They are passionate about the environment, fair trade, economic justice and global peace. Unfortunately, many do not yet work in concert with people of color in their own country to pursue this agenda; they champion "alternative economic development strategies" across the globe, but not across town. These people could be great allies in uplifting our inner cities if they are given encouragement and a clear opportunity to do so.

On the other hand, many groups of people of color do not want to work in coalition with majority white organizations and white leaders. Many fear betrayal; others resent chronic white arrogance. Cultural differences and power imbalances create tensions; some organizations are actually committed to a racially exclusive ideology. Even though such organizations

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could benefit from additional allies and outside assistance, the very folks who could most benefit from a green opportunity agenda are loath to get involved.

Taken together, this means that the various US social change movements today are still nearly as racially segregated as the rest of society. This is a moral tragedy. And it is a tremendous barrier to building sufficient power to advance a positive social change agenda for anyone and everyone. Breaking through this standoff is a critical first step toward building a New Deal coalition for the new century—which would be the only thing dynamic, diverse and powerful enough to overcome the obstacles to progress.

In the New Deal period, it was a broad electoral coalition that moved the government onto the side of ordinary people, not FDR alone. Farmers, workers, ethnic minorities, students, intellectuals, progressive bankers and forward-thinking business leaders all joined forces at the ballot box to support FDR and his Congressional backers as they worked to revive the economy.

To accomplish our tasks today, we need a similar force: an electoral New Deal coalition for our time. Let's call it the Green Growth Alliance. Such an alliance would be a broad effort fusing wise, compassionate forces in civil society with the enlightened self-interest of the rising green business community.

On the civil society side, five main partners should make up the Green Growth Alliance:

§ *Labor*. Organized labor has been in steep decline over the past few decades, but it remains the best and most stalwart defender of working people's interests—in the workplace and beyond. Policies that lead to the retrofitting and green rebuilding of the nation will give unions a tremendous opportunity to expand and diversify their ranks. If the unions and green business leaders can identify win-win compromises on wages and other issues, they can work together to pass legislation that will help both sides.

§ *Social justice activists*. Legions of people have committed themselves to the ideal of opportunity for all. Advocates for economic justice, civil rights, immigrants' rights, women's rights, disability rights, gay rights, veterans' rights and other causes should seize the opportunity to ensure that the new, green economy has the principles of diversity and inclusion baked in from the beginning.

§ *Environmentalists*. With their large organizations, broad networks, Beltway savvy and large budgets, the mainstream environmental organizations have tremendous assets to bring to bear in the effort to green the country. Now they have a chance to turn the page on decades of perceived elitism by working as better collaborators with other sectors of society. An exchange of knowledge, experience and even personnel between the mainstream environmentalists and social justice groups would be healthy and invigorating for everyone.

§ *Students*. Students' energy and enthusiasm have already turned up the heat in the movement to prevent catastrophic climate change. Just a few years ago, it was considered outlandish for anyone to call for an aggressive target like an 80 percent reduction in carbon emissions by the year 2050. But youth-centered efforts like Step It Up, Focus the Nation and the Energy Action Coalition have already made "80 by '50" a mainstream demand—accepted by presidential candidates and even energy-company CEOs. As more racially diverse groups like the League of Young Voters, the Hip Hop Caucus, the Environmental Justice and Climate Change Initiative and Young People For (YP4) join the movement, the sky is the limit for the next generation's leadership role.

§ *Faith organizations*. The moral framework suggested by the three principles of social-uplift environmentalism (equal protection, equal opportunity and reverence for all creation) should attract faith leaders and congregants. Many are looking for alternatives to the divisive fundamentalism that has taken up a great deal of airtime lately. The idea of "creation care" is a positive alternative frame that can help faith communities move into action as part of the Green Growth Alliance.

The goal is straightforward: to promote the interests of green capital and technology in a way that spreads the benefits as widely as possible.

These five forces, in alliance with green business, can change the face of politics in this country. Their goal would be straightforward: to win government policy that promotes the interests of green capital and green technology over the interests of gray capital (extractive industries, fossil-fuel companies) in a way that spreads the benefits as widely as possible. The idea would be to resolve the economic, ecological and social crises on terms that maximally favor green capital and ordinary people.

Fortunately, the Green Growth Alliance is not just a theoretical necessity. It is already becoming a practical reality. National organizations like the Apollo Alliance and the Blue Green Alliance have come on the scene, promoting good jobs in the clean-energy sector. The Apollo Alliance incudes labor unions, environmental organizations, community-based groups and businesses; the Blue Green Alliance is a partnership of the Sierra Club and the United Steelworkers, recently joined by the Natural Resources Defense Council and the Communications Workers.

Former Vice President Al Gore's Alliance for Climate Protection is also reaching out broadly to engage new sectors in the battle to avert catastrophic climate change. And the new kids on the block—1Sky and Green for All—are engaging important constituencies like PTA moms and African-American ministers.

Despite these developments, the notion that a politics centered on green solutions could build a muscular governing majority in the United States still seems doubtful. That is because the "green movement" seems to be the cushy home of such a thin and unrepresentative slice of the public.

The fact is, when many ordinary people hear the term

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"green," they still automatically think the message is probably for a fancy, elite set—not for themselves. And as long as that remains true, the green movement will remain too anemic politically and too alien culturally to rescue the country.

Enlightened, affluent people who embrace green values do a great deal of good for the country and the earth—and they are making an important difference every day. But nobody should make the mistake of believing that a small circle of highly educated, upper-income enviros can unite America and lead it all by themselves. Eco-elite politics can't even unite California.

If you doubt me, let's examine a recent statewide election in California to see how eco-elitism can actually set back environmental initiatives—even very thoughtful and well-financed ones, even in places where the overall support for environmentalism is relatively high. Everyone loves to praise GOP Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger for signing global-warming legislation in 2006. Yet few discuss the fact that just a few months later, the majority of California voters rejected a clean-energy ballot measure called Proposition 87.

This defeat holds many lessons for us going forward. The idea for Prop 87 was brilliant in its simplicity: California would start taxing the oil and gas that oil companies extract from our soil and shores. This state-level oil tax would generate immense revenues that would go into a huge "clean-energy" research and technology fund—totaling $4 billion over ten years.

At first, the measure was polling off the charts. Victory seemed certain. But in the end, Californians rejected the measure, 55 percent to 45 percent. Why? Mainly because Big Oil convinced ordinary Californians that the price tag would be too high for them to bear. The oil and gas industry spent $95 million warning that the tax would be passed along to consumers. It suggested that the tax would push gas and home-energy costs through the roof and hurt the poorest Californians. And in the end, the biggest clean-energy ballot measure in the country went down.

The defeat of Prop 87 should sound a clear warning for all of us as we work to birth a green, postcarbon economy. We must recognize and celebrate the fact that well-off champions of the environment will be indispensable to any coalition effort. In fact, it is their business smarts, monetary resources, social standing and political savvy that have propelled the green wave to this point. But at the same time, the eco-elite cannot win major change alone. After all, if a Prop 87–style collapse is possible in the Golden State, what do you think will happen in the other forty-nine?

To change our laws and culture, the green movement must attract and include the majority of all people, not just the majority of affluent people. The time has come to move beyond eco-elitism to eco-populism. Eco-populism would always foreground those green solutions that can improve ordinary people's standard of living—and decrease their cost of living.

But bringing people of different races and classes and backgrounds together under a single banner is tougher than it sounds. I have been trying to bridge this divide for nearly a decade. And I learned a few things along the way.

What I found is that leaders from impoverished areas like Oakland, California, tended to focus on three areas: social justice, political solutions and social change. They cared primarily about "the people." They focused their efforts on fixing schools, improving healthcare, defending civil rights and reducing the prison population. Their "social change" work involved lobbying, campaigning and protesting. They were wary of businesses; instead, they turned to the political system and government to help solve the problems of the community.

The leaders I met from affluent places like Marin County (just north of San Francisco), San Francisco and Silicon Valley had what seemed to be the opposite approach. Their three focus areas were ecology, business solutions and "inner change." They were champions of "the planet"—rainforests and important species like whales and polar bears. Many were dedicated to inner-change work, including meditation and yoga. And they put a great deal of stress on making wise, earth-honoring consumer choices. In fact, many were either green entrepreneurs or investors in eco-friendly businesses.

Every effort I made to get the two groups together initially was a disaster—sometimes ending in tears, anger and slammed doors. Trying to make sense of the differences, I wrote out three binaries on a napkin:

1. Ecology vs. Social Justice
2. Business Solutions (Entrepreneurship) vs. Political Solutions (Activism)
3. Spiritual/Inner Change vs. Social/Outer Change

People on both sides of the equation tended to think that their preferences precluded any serious consideration of the options presented on the opposite side.

Increasingly, I saw the value and importance of both approaches. I thought, What would we have if we replaced those "versus" symbols with "plus" signs? What if we built a movement at the intersection of the ecology and social justice movements, of entrepreneurship and activism, of inner change and social change? What if we didn't just have hybrid cars—what if we had a hybrid movement?

To return to the metaphor of the slave ship Amistad, the question in my mind has become, What if those rebel Africans, while still in chains, had looked out and noticed the name of their ship was not the Amistad but the Titanic? How would that fact have affected their mission? What would change if they knew the entire ship was imperiled, that everyone on it—the slavers and enslaved—could all die if the ship continued on its course, unchanged?

The rebels suddenly would have had a very different set of leadership challenges. They would have had the obligation not just to liberate the captives but also to save the entire ship. In fact, the hero would be the one who found a way to save everyone on board—including the slavers. And the urgency of freeing the captives would have been that much greater—because the smarts and the effort of everyone would have been needed to save everyone.

For the sake of the ship—our planet—and all aboard it, the effort to go green must be all hands on deck.

We can take the unfinished business of America on questions of inclusion and equal opportunity and combine it with the new business of building a green economy, thereby healing the country on two fronts and redeeming the soul of the nation. We must. ■

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Establishment Disorder

Only a tough investigation will keep the Wall Street boys from trying to fix their own mess.

by WILLIAM GREIDER

Who rigged Wall Street? The question absorbed people for years after the crash of 1929 and the Great Depression that followed. Now it is before us again. The financial crisis that has swept away great wealth and important banking firms was not an accident of nature. The ingredients for disaster were engineered by human architects seeking greater fortunes and authorized by political actors in both parties. The wiring for this calamity was complex, involving obscure changes in how the financial system functions. It will take months, maybe years, to understand it fully.

But in order to reform the system, the country has to find answers. The economy will not be truly healed until the causes are identified and the financial system is reconstructed on sound public principles. The names of key players in both parties must be identified, not for vengeance but because many of them still exercise enormous influence and hope to supervise the repair work, protecting their interests and papering over their past errors. Economic policy-makers like Phil Gramm, Robert Rubin, Lawrence Summers and their protégés arranged Wall Street for inflated profits and ruinous risk-taking and are now hovering around both presidential candidates. We will not get to the hard truth about what went wrong and how to fix it if these people are in charge of investigating themselves.

In the early 1930s, the country had the Pecora hearings and sensational disclosures that stunned Wall Street and public opinion. Formed by the Senate, the commission of inquiry went through three chief counsels before it found one tough enough to stand up to the titans of banking—an assistant district attorney from New York City named Ferdinand Pecora. His investigators pored over the books of famous Wall Street firms, then Pecora personally grilled the self-righteous bankers. Among many revelations, the commission found that J.P. Morgan Jr. and twenty partners of his firm had paid no income taxes in 1931 or '32 and only trivial amounts before that. "If the laws are faulty, it is not my problem," Morgan testified.

The Morgan bankers maintained lists of "preferred clients," who were invited to participate in their speculative stock-market schemes. The list of insiders included public figures like FDR's first Treasury secretary. Hoping to discredit the "circus" atmosphere of the hearings, Morgan's men brought a midget, who sat on his lap. Their PR stunt backfired. The nation was convulsed in derisive laughter. The securities regulations enacted by the New Deal were grounded in what Pecora revealed.

Our crisis might not get a Pecora investigation, not one that digs out the whole truth, for this reason: this time, the dirty details of who rigged what involve many incumbent politicians,

JANNA BROWER

Democrats and Republicans alike, and the deals they worked out with their financial patrons on Wall Street. A close accounting would reveal how both parties collaborated for more than two decades in repealing or gutting the prudent safeguards put in place by the New Deal reformers. Congress still has some bulldog investigators, like Representatives Henry Waxman and John Conyers, but their colleagues will have very little appetite for "naming names" or exploring the money connections between Washington and Wall Street.

To dig out the answers, we must rely on the next best thing—a vigilant free press and tough-minded reporting. If that sounds improbable, some elements of major media are already on the case (perhaps seeking redemption for the Fourth Estate's utter failure during the run-up to war in Iraq). For example, Peter Goodman of the *New York Times* produced a devastating account of how the Federal Reserve and the Clinton administration collaborated to block efforts to regulate the credit derivatives that became a critical factor in inducing the present crisis.

Goodman patiently reconstructed how the Commodity Futures Trading Commission's (CFTC) efforts to impose regulatory oversite on derivatives were stymied by Fed chair Alan Greenspan, Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin and SEC chair Arthur Levitt in 1997. Greenspan, Rubin and Levitt very publicly kneecapped commission chair Brooksley Born and effectively drove her from government. They staged a brutal dressing-down and urged Congress to prevent her from acting. Congress complied with a law blocking CFTC action. Lawrence

William Greider, The Nation's national affairs correspondent, is a fellow at The Nation Institute. His latest book is Come Home, America, *due out in February from Rodale.*

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Summers, Rubin's deputy at Treasury and later secretary himself, personally rebuked Born and accused her of threatening a financial crisis.

The opposite proved to be true. By not applying timely regulation, Washington set up the country for the disaster that followed. Given a free hand and virtually no oversight, major banks and investment houses became the leading salesmen for the dubious derivatives, assuring clients these devices protected them against risk on mortgage securities and other high-flying investments. Instead, the derivative contracts became a multitrillion-dollar time bomb threatening the banks themselves.

The history of purposeful rigging includes at least six other pivotal changes that slyly dismantled the old banking system and created a debt casino with extraordinary gambling and outrageous profits. Reporters, for instance, might look into the initial deregulation of banking—enacted by the Democratic Congress and president in 1980—when interest-rate ceilings were repealed and the sin of usury was decriminalized, authorizing the predatory lending and sky-high rates that are now commonplace. Another bipartisan project worth investigating was ably assisted by the Federal Reserve—the repeal, in 1999, of the New Deal's Glass-Steagall Act by the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act. The latter measure allowed the merger of closely regulated commercial banks with unregulated investment houses and opened numerous trapdoors and escape hatches for bankers to game the differences between the two.

At the time, leading newspapers led cheers for this stuff, but even the *Times* editorial page is revising its views. The press lacks subpoena power, but the *Times*'s financial and business section is a bright shining beacon for tough reporting, with a dozen or more deeply informed and aggressive reporters, led by Gretchen Morgenson, who are destroying the old myths of deregulation and Wall Street rectitude. (The *Times* also has a stable of cheerleaders who keep promoting the official happy talk.)

Greenspan, under grilling from Representative Waxman, offered a weasel-worded admission that he had been mistaken about derivatives. Otherwise, none of these guys have acknowledged error, much less apologized to the American people.

Right now, national politics is in the midst of a deep power struggle over who controls the path of reform and recovery. The old order understands viscerally that its domination is threatened, and financial titans in the shrinking Wall Street club are attempting to pre-empt opposition. The bailout action so far, with hundreds of billions devoted to preserving what's left of the status quo, suggests they are succeeding. But events are not cooperating, and a deepening recession will keep raising the question: what did the public get for all its money? Bush and Paulson will be gone, but the next president will have to answer that question.

John McCain, it seems fair to say, is a hopeless case, given his weak grasp of economic issues. Should he win, McCain would likely stick to the same script, counseled by former Senator Phil Gramm, a leading architect of deregulation, and the many corporate and financial lobbyists who supervise his campaign and agenda. McCain would doubtless face a larger and more aggressive Congressional opposition, but Democrats have been weak and unreliable in resisting the old order's attempts to hang on to power.

As president, Barack Obama will inherit the awkward straddle the Democratic Party has maintained for many years—trying to serve the financial sector and its interests on one side while satisfying (or appeasing) popular constituencies like labor on the other. But Obama will have to manage this balancing act in much tougher circumstances—an economic contraction swiftly turning darker. As a candidate, he has mostly surrounded himself with Clinton-era economic policy-makers and people implicated in "reforms" that led to financial breakdown. This has caused considerable despair in some left-liberal quarters over the possibility that Obama will repeat the abrupt about-face of Clinton's first administration, when he dumped his "putting people first" campaign rhetoric and governed instead as an ally of multinational finance and business.

If he wins, Obama will have to decide if his presidency can subsist on small-bore reforms or must govern with a far more ambitious agenda.

The despair is premature. It grossly underestimates the high skills and distinctive nerve of this very astute politician. Given his Harvard background and cautious manner of calculating positions, Obama is at home among centrist, establishment figures. As an African-American man and junior senator running for president, Obama needed their respectability and courted them. If he wins, however, he will be governing in very different circumstances and will have to decide if his presidency can subsist on cautious, small-bore reforms or must govern with a far more ambitious conception of what the country needs. The hard debate begins the day after the election. Things are changing rapidly, and none of us know how it will turn out. Obama probably doesn't either.

A photo-op Obama arranged with his economic advisers a few weeks before the election tells the story. Arrayed on either side were policy leaders from the old order. Former Federal Reserve chair Paul Volcker collaborated in the initial deregulation of banking in 1980 and presided over the initial bailouts of banks deemed "too big to fail." Robert Rubin was the architect of Clinton's center-right economic strategy and is now senior counselor at Citigroup, itself endangered and the recipient of $25 billion in public aid. Lawrence Summers, disgraced as president of Harvard, is now managing partner of D.E. Shaw, a $39 billion private equity firm and hedge fund that specializes in esoteric mathematical investing strategies. Laura Tyson was chair of Clinton's Council of Economic Advisors and is now a UC-Berkeley professor who sits on the boards of Morgan Stanley, AT&T and KPMG, the global accounting giant.

None of these people are well equipped to lead fundamental reform of the system they helped create or to speak reliably for the broader interests of society. Volcker, now 81, was a brilliant Fed chair who subdued runaway inflation, but he was no friend of working people. His hard-nosed monetary policy smashed wages, even as he managed the rescue of major banks in the

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Third World debt crisis, replacing their exposure with public lending from the IMF and World Bank. Rubin is preoccupied with saving his bank from ruin, but Obama's staff is loaded with Rubin acolytes. Nine months ago, Rubin dismissed this crisis as a cyclical hiccup. Summers, on the other hand, seems to be actively running for Treasury secretary or maybe Fed chair. His public pronouncements are taking on a softer edge, and he has dropped his Calvinist devotion to balanced budgets. But now that he works for a celebrated hedge fund and private equity firm, where does Summers stand on regulating these creatures?

Informed gossip says other leading candidates for Treasury secretary are New York Fed president Timothy Geithner, a Rubin protégé; New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine, a former Rubin colleague at Goldman Sachs; and Jamie Dimon, CEO of JPMorgan Chase, the bank with the largest vulnerability on dangerous derivatives. Corzine is the only one with a strong record of social concerns. Another long shot is Sheila Bair, a Republican regulator and chair of the FDIC, whose aggressive corrective actions have angered some big-name bankers.

Finding a financier without severely conflicting personal interests experienced enough to manage the massive bailout will be difficult, no matter who wins the White House. And standing too close to the old order does not seem very promising. Given this country's deformities of power, the president usually needs the establishment's help to prevail or at least avoid open warfare on important matters. Given the extreme circumstances Obama would inherit, he may face a very different calculation. If the old financial order is at the heart of the economic problem, would the president be better off protecting it or trying to disturb its power and cut its institutions down to size? For the first time in many decades, it may be smarter politics to confront the "malefactors of great wealth" (as FDR called them in the 1930s) and force major reforms of their behavior. Does Obama have the guts for such a dramatic confrontation? We don't yet know. But we do know it took a lot of nerve for a young African-American man with a different vision of the country to run for president when the reigning elders told him it was not his turn.

The established order, meanwhile, is setting out some "opportunities" for the next president to demonstrate that he is a high-minded, responsible leader. These are really traps that could doom his presidency. Military leaders are insisting on larger Pentagon budgets after withdrawal from Iraq—preempting the social spending that people have been promised. Financial leaders are urging that greater powers be given to the Fed despite the failures of that cloistered institution. This would be a great victory for the Wall Street club, cementing the privileged powers of the corporate state the bailouts seem to have created. The so-called "responsibles" are likewise proposing "reform" that will cut benefits for entitlement programs, especially Social Security, as a way to correct the nation's budget deficit. This would constitute another historic swindle of the people—much larger than the bank bailout.

President Obama would likely gain favor with the public if he rejected all three of these propositions. He would be bolstered further if the people found their voice. This expression can take the form of direct actions, large or small, nonviolent civil disobedience that pushes the new president further than he perhaps intends to go. People can reshape public opinion by showing other citizens they have the power to stop foreclosures in their neighborhood or rally the jobless to demand public employment for all or surround the rescued banks with thousands of their new public "investors," demanding lower credit-card interest rates or relaxed terms for failing mortgages.

The financial crisis continues to spread upheaval in many directions, and we do not yet know how wide or deep the destruction will flow. But strange and sometimes wonderful surprises can happen in unsettled circumstances. In the crisis of the Great Depression, a Mormon Republican banker from Utah showed up in Washington, pushing his heretical understanding of the crisis. Marriner Eccles never graduated from college, but he figured out from his banking experiences the basic economic principles the nation should follow (which later became known as Keynesian economics). Eccles was desperate to share his insights. In February 1933, he managed to testify before the Senate Finance Committee. In one sitting, he laid out an agenda that encompassed nearly all of the important measures the New Deal subsequently enacted. The left-wing advisers around Roosevelt recognized a kindred spirit, and Eccles was asked to join the White House staff. He drafted the 1935 reform legislation that created the modern Federal Reserve. Then FDR appointed him as Fed chair.

Maybe in our chaotic circumstances there will be similar odd convergences. One hopes the next president will be open to them—willing to listen to fresh thinking from outside the circle of established opinion-makers and brave enough to act on new ideas. ■

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Father d'Escoto's United Nations

The General Assembly's new president is a champion for the world's most dispossessed.

by BARBARA CROSSETTE

The revolutionary priest now wears muted diplomatic pinstripes. But Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, the Maryknoll father who defied the Vatican to serve the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua in the 1970s, has never lost his passion for righting wrongs or his unshakable Christian faith. He has brought both to an unexpected role this year: president of the United Nations General Assembly.

His hopes for the year ahead are large. He wants to democratize the Security Council to make it more reflective of the world, a goal that has eluded his predecessors. Handed the global financial crisis as the perfect prop, he also aims to keep a light shining on the most dispossessed nations and people through the General Assembly, including a special panel on October 30 to discuss fixing the world economy. "The future will be better," he said, "because to a certain extent, this idolatry of the market was a false god." His mantra: "The way to help each other is to move from the logic of I and mine to the logic of we and ours."

D'Escoto, 75, is by no means a diplomatic novice or a newcomer to the UN or New York. From 1979 to '90 he was the international face of the first Sandinista government, in which he served as foreign minister under President Daniel Ortega Saavedra after the overthrow of the Somoza dynasty. It was a tumultuous time of civil wars across Central America, and the Sandinistas were hounded relentlessly by a US-backed armed "counterrevolution"—the Contras. D'Escoto took the United States to the International Court of Justice—the World Court—charging Washington with aggression by land and with a sea blockade, and won. The Reagan administration did not participate in hearings, ignored the ruling and declared that the court had no jurisdiction. After Ortega was defeated in 1990 by a center-right party, d'Escoto remained loyal to the movement, and when the Sandinistas returned to power in 2006, he became President Ortega's foreign policy adviser.

In an early October interview in his UN office, d'Escoto said he was more than surprised when he began hearing rumors this spring that his name was in play as the candidate of Latin America for the General Assembly presidency, a one-year appointment rotated around the regions of the world. "My candidature was launched without my knowing it," he said. "I knew that President Ortega didn't want to ask me, because he thought that I would say no, because I have said no to many things." But when the offer was made, d'Escoto told the government to go ahead, "because I won't be elected anyway."

"I said, if it does happen, I do it for the more than half of the men and women of this world who are living in destitution, in hunger," d'Escoto said. "I'll go there to speak on their behalf—and to promote the cause of peace. And then I said, if I am elected, Lord, help me to be prepared." A carved wooden bust of Jesus dominates his desk, a novel touch in this UN setting.

AP PHOTO/RICHARD DREW

Gordon Brown, Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann and Ban Ki-moon

Perhaps as a sign of the changing times, the United States, which continues to abhor the Sandinistas, did not try to block his election. Zalmay Khalilzad, the US ambassador, said that choosing a president was a General Assembly matter. In reality, there was very little the United States could have done to counter the majority of nations supporting d'Escoto.

The highly visible job of General Assembly president is a physical challenge for d'Escoto. For more than forty years he has suffered from Ménière's syndrome, a condition of the inner ear that upsets the body's balance. He struggles at times with the din and rush of movement around him at the UN, an aide said. Receptions and cocktail parties can turn into nightmares, so he tries to limit social activity—not easy around the UN. "It was initially diagnosed forty-five years ago in New York," d'Escoto said. "But I managed to live with it. It didn't blossom until eight years ago—then very, very strongly. You know, 70 percent of these cases cure themselves. I belong to the 30 percent that don't cure." Bouts of severe vertigo as often as three times a week once left him confined to his home for three months. He rejected psychological counseling in favor of prayer. "I said, 'Blessed Mother, please help me.'"

Miguel d'Escoto was born in Los Angeles in 1933, the son of a Nicaraguan diplomat. An uncle, Salomón de la Selva (1893–1959), was a famous Nicaraguan poet and novelist educated at Williams College and active in poetry circles as well as the labor movement in New York. He was the "life partner" of Edna St. Vincent Millay, d'Escoto said, adding that his uncle wrote fluently in English

Barbara Crossette, The Nation's United Nations correspondent, was the New York Times UN bureau chief from 1994 to 2001.

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and Spanish until American interventions in Nicaragua before World War II led him to vow he would "never again write a word in the English language—not poetry."

In 1928 de la Selva wrote for *The Nation* an admiring, romantic profile of Augusto César Sandino, who fought a guerrilla insurgency against US Marines then occupying the country and for whom the Sandinista movement was named. D'Escoto says it was his uncle who secured for *The Nation*'s Carleton Beals his historic interview with Sandino, the first by a North American journalist, which led to a series of articles later that year. D'Escoto says he is a fan of the magazine. "I have always liked *The Nation* very much," he added. He also reads *The New York Review of Books* and *Sojourners*, a magazine of faith, politics and culture. He wants to avoid the subject of US politics, he said, but he has read Barack Obama's *The Audacity of Hope*. "I liked it," he said. "It's talking from the heart. God bless him."

D'Escoto's religious education began at a seminary of the Maryknoll missionary order in Glen Ellyn, Illinois, in 1947 and continued at the Maryknoll center in Ossining, New York. While in New York, he also picked up a master's degree in journalism from Columbia University. He was ordained a Maryknoll priest in 1961 and served the missionary order in the slums of Chile before returning to New York, where he founded Orbis Books, a Maryknoll publishing house. At about the same time, d'Escoto helped organize support among intellectuals for the Sandinista National Liberation Front, which had just been formed.

Back in New York again, d'Escoto carries some baggage of recent Sandinista excesses that have cost Ortega the loss of friends in the United States. For years, Ortega has been alienating Nicaraguan colleagues within the movement, who see him as increasingly dictatorial. And wider international criticism of his authoritarian style has been growing. Ortega's Nicaragua, pandering to conservative Catholics to get the Sandinistas re-elected in 2006, now has one of the hemisphere's harshest antiabortion laws. Its judicial system has been distorted to be used against critics. The offices of women's organizations angry over lingering charges that the president raped his stepdaughter have been raided, along with those of other independent nongovernmental organizations. Nicaragua is the only country apart from Russia to have recognized South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent nations.

In late August more than sixty Latin American artistic and cultural leaders called publicly for an end to what they deemed Ortega's vendetta against Ernesto Cardenal, a renowned poet-priest in the tradition of liberation theology who was the Sandinistas' minister of culture from 1979 to '88. Iberian intellectuals also weighed in. Portuguese writer José Saramago, a Nobel Prize winner, said that "once more a revolution has been betrayed from within."

At the August inauguration of Paraguay's leftist president, Fernando Lugo, Cardenal had publicly called Ortega a "thief" and implied he had become an echo of the Somozas; later an old court case against the 83-year-old poet involving a murky property dispute, dismissed earlier, was revived. Cardenal said he would go to jail rather than pay a fine of about $1,000. D'Escoto, who remains close to the president, said enemies of the government have politicized the dispute, describing Cardenal's predicament as a "sad spectacle." D'Escoto does not criticize Ortega or defend Cardenal's outspokenness, though in discussing the case he admitted, "To me it is something painful."

When the sixty-third session of the UN General Assembly opened in September, it was inevitable that its president would come face to face with another president, George W. Bush. D'Escoto adopts an overtly philosophical strategy in dealing with the United States these days. "Self-criticism and criticism is vital for progress," he said. "But I have always said criticism is a prerogative of those who love." He took that tack when he met Bush for the first time at an American reception at the Waldorf-Astoria. "They were announcing people as they approached the president," he recalled. "They said, 'Father Miguel d'Escoto, president of the General Assembly.' I went right over and I said, 'Mr. President, first thing I want to tell you is that I love you, and I love your country.'"

That said, d'Escoto turns to a sharp analysis of what has gone wrong with the United States and what Washington has done to bring down the reputation of the UN. He starts with American strengths. "I have on the walls here the four people who have inspired me the most," he said, pointing to portraits he has hung in his UN office. "I'm not talking, of course, about our Lord Jesus, but kind of contemporaries: Gandhi, he's from India, and two Americans: Dorothy Day of New York—she used to work near here, on the Lower East Side—and Martin Luther King. And on this side, Tolstoy.

"So you see, of the people who influenced me the most, if I select four, two happen to be Americans," he said. "What I mean to say is that this country has produced great people. This country must not be made synonymous with selfishness and rampant individualism. It's not that way. There are great waves of spiritual strength in this country. Of late, there has been an effort to identify the country with the total idolatry of the market. They say, In God we trust. No. In the market we trust. And in guns."

D'Escoto sees the US invasion of Iraq without Security Council backing as an attack on the UN. "The prestige of the United States is internationally very low. Now it just happens that the prestige of the United Nations is also very low. But this is not a coincidence. The one has dragged the other down. Why? Because people say the Security Council isn't even able to call its own members to order." That brings him back to the vexed issue of reforming the Council. With considerable credibility among developing nations, d'Escoto seems to have a chance of making progress. But his problem isn't only with the "permanent five" nations unwilling to dilute their Council privileges. Developing nations show no signs of agreeing on who should represent them if new permanent seats are added.

"I'm quite aware of the fact that in every region, aspirants have antibodies," he said. "I also think that this presidency, unfortunately, will be judged on whether or not it was able to resolve that problem. So we mean to do our best. But having said that, I'm aware that even if it were to be resolved, it doesn't help with what is the fundamental problem, which is, How do we get the Security Council not necessarily to resolve every problem on the entire planet but at least to control its own members from being the instigators? You even lose the interest in preventing violence when it's beginning right from within."

The interview over, d'Escoto doesn't say goodbye. "God bless," he says. "Say a prayer for peace." ■

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The Road to Socialism?

Contrary to what you may have heard from John McCain, there's a long way to go.

by PHILIP GREEN

The End of American Capitalism? was the portentous headline in the October 10 *Washington Post*. It's part of an apocalyptic story line about the coming of socialism that is prominent these days in the media and on the McCain campaign trail. The accompanying article by Anthony Faiola went on to say, "Many economists are asking whether it remains a free market if the government is so deeply enmeshed in the financial system."

He has, I suggest, little to fear. The American version of the "free market" is a hyperbolic conception readily abandoned in times of crisis throughout our history. As Steve Lohr pointed out in the *New York Times* four days later, "the federal government has occasionally taken stakes in railways, coal mines and steel mills, and has even taken a controlling interest in banks when it was deemed to be in the national interest…typically [returning them] to private hands." That obvious historical fact, though, did not prevent Paul Rubin, an Emory University economics professor, from waxing hysterical in the *Wall Street Journal* on October 21 over the fearsome prospect of a "New New Deal" that "may soon put our economy on track for a catastrophe."

If American-style "capitalism" were indeed the real thing, Faiola's question might be worthy of causing Rubin and other economists palpitations. But the United States is a lonely outlier in the capitalist world, throughout which "free" markets have long been constrained and regulated. Sometimes this has been pushed by organized capitalists at the top—it was not steelworkers who advocated the seizure of the American steel mills in 1952, or left-wing intellectuals who advocated creating the Federal Reserve, or Bernie Sanders who insisted on giving Henry Paulson dictatorial powers over the financial sector—and sometimes the push has come through the demands of organized workers and farmers at the bottom. As Karl Polanyi pointed out in his classic *The Great Transformation*, it took a great deal of centralized planning and legislative control to create the early "laissez-faire" economies, and the masses of people have never gone for long without demanding that the destructive human results of these economies be brought under at least some control. Such interventions have, on the whole, raised the indexes of well-being and even of democracy in the advanced industrial economies, indexes on which the United States is regularly far from the top. Yet they have yielded little reason for the remaining socialists among us to believe that capitalism is anywhere near disappearing.

This is because the free market, to the extent that it has ever existed for any serious period, is nothing but a favored instrument of capitalism, not the thing itself. Real capitalism is a particular process of material accumulation, an engine of growth and a regime of governance and institutions devoted to keeping that engine running. In a capitalist society this accumulation takes place primarily through the actions of private enterprises, underwritten by laws and customs that make accumulation the primary goal of society. That is only half the story, though. The other half is that a successful capitalist regime creates a surplus in the form of profit, and this surplus, though it is created by workers, is totally appropriated by owners and either saved or expended according to their desires. Some of that surplus is clawed back from them by the government in the form of taxes, but a good deal of those tax revenues further the activities of private enterprise and the owners in the form of necessary improvements to infrastructure, subsidies to troubled but valued enterprises, and funding for armies and police forces to protect their property. So capitalism goes about its business, creating a surplus that enriches the coffers of those who accumulate wealth while providing enough of a living to those who work for the accumulators to keep them from throwing sand in the engine's gears. When either half of that bargain fails, state intervention is the inevitable result.

But this is not socialism, and it is certainly not democratic socialism. Only if the great surplus of accumulated wealth were disposed of democratically for "the general welfare"—reinvested or distributed as income or services—would we be living in a socialist society. In a capitalist society, on the other hand, expenditures on what might be thought of as public purposes are definitely the tail wagged by the dog. There are different kinds of capitalism, of course: the state capitalisms of East Asia, in which the state not only regulates but often organizes enterprises and prescribes their economic behavior; or the social welfare states of Western Europe, in which the political power of organized workers has forced a greater proportion of surplus to be used for redistributive social welfare purposes than is the case in the more privatized and less class-conscious United States. In all of these (with the exception of East Asian capitalism), the primary goal of government is to keep private enterprise moving, so that strong government regulation comes into being only at the crash landings, rarely at the takeoffs. And in its strongest (and uncorrupted) form, regulation lasts only as long as is necessary to get a stalled machine moving again.

The financial panic and worldwide government responses to it have, for the moment, obscured this basic dynamic. To put it simply, banks are not producers of a surplus—or often of anything at all. To a certain extent investment banks lubricate the wheels of industry by making loans, but they provide only a minor proportion of the funds needed for reinvestment and further accumulation (and this is often only a small portion of their business). The instruments of financial speculation mostly

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function as gigantic casinos, enriching some and impoverishing others but not making anything useful happen, and causing a great deal of damage to the general welfare in the process. Therefore, even for the cowboy capitalists of the Bush administration, it's relatively easy to contemplate re-regulating banks at a critical moment such as this one.

So what can we contemplate that would not be just a bailout—necessary as that may be for loosening the strings of credit for people whose daily behavior makes the business section of the *New York Times* look like the crime blotter of a small-city newspaper—but an approach to a new, more democratic social order? In *The Communist Manifesto* Marx offered a ten-point program; being a lot less confident than he was about the details of what is to be done, I will content myself with three main points.

The first thing to do is to implement precisely what Paul Rubin fears: a new New Deal to halt the human catastrophe of onrushing (not creeping) laissez-faire-ism. Neither the poor and powerless nor the rich and powerful can think coherently about next steps or rational policies when they stand on the brink of personal or institutional apocalypse; basic security must precede the use of reason.

Beyond that, the sine qua non for any social order that puts human needs first is a genuinely progressive tax structure, one that taxes not only incomes but, more crucially and decisively, accumulated wealth. This is not about "spreading the wealth around," though there's nothing wrong with that as an ultimate goal, but rather about controlling wealth's spiraling and unmitigated power over the lives of everyone who doesn't have it.

Finally, "control" here means using the power of democratically elected and constituted governments, central or local or even within workplaces and industries, to confront the sometimes horrendous spillover costs of production that orthodox economists, in their disdain for human life, consider mere "externalities"—like the wastelands created by uncontrolled pollution. One might begin this process almost anywhere. But to take just one example, given the outlines of a frightening future of climate change that everyone (even the ideological naysayers) knows awaits us, we would certainly want to consider taking democratic control of the American auto industry in order to rationalize its structure, improve its abysmal performance, give workers more input into the decisions that affect their lives and lessen its ecologically destructive demands on scarce resources. The same considerations apply to the management of energy policy, which is too critical to be left to industry representatives, lobbyists and, say, the power brokers of Alaska. The "people," through their representatives, might do a poor job of this, but it couldn't be worse than what's been done for almost a century by the out-of-control producers of carbon emissions.

For anything like this to come about, so many changes in the climate of opinion and the opinion-forming institutions that help produce it would have to take place that it may be utopian even to make such a suggestion. But that is precisely the kind of change we would need if we wanted to say we were living in a truly noncapitalist—that is, democratic socialist—society. ■

Letters

(continued from page 2)
which China flirted with Western answers, Chinese now seem eager to find more homegrown, Chinese answers. In this regard, Confucianism is logical and tempting.

My thanks to Richard Low for his perspicacious clarifications.

Orville Schell

Constitutional Conventions

Portland, Ore.

For decades Daniel Lazare has been obsessed with the notion that the Constitution is the root of our country's most intractable problems. This obsession stems from Lazare's anxiety about textual meaning. He cannot accept that no text is self-explanatory, that no text possesses one essential meaning.

Lazare's anxiety is evident in his review of Laurence Tribe's new book, *The Invisible Constitution* ["No Exit," Oct. 20]. Lazare also thinks we could rewrite the Constitution, and then somehow we would all agree upon its meaning. "After all," he explains, "if an editor cannot understand a particularly convoluted bit of prose, he will ask the author to revise it." Likewise, considering some of our disputes over constitutional issues, Lazare argues that the American people "should order a rewrite" of the Constitution.

Lazare's argument represents an extreme form of originalism—even more extreme than Justice Scalia's. Scalia argues that meaning stems only from the original text, so the text should be interpreted using only the words in the original text, as the words were used at the time it was written. Lazare argues that meaning stems only from the original text, so any disputes over interpretation signify a need to rewrite the original text!

Lazare is an originalist; Tribe is not. And Lazare has been calling for a new constitutional convention for at least ten years, most notably in his book *The Frozen Republic: How the Constitution Is Paralyzing Democracy.* So, naturally, Lazare would use his review to voice his reactionary anxiety over textual meaning and rehash his old polemic for a new Constitution.

Steve Kasner

Lazare Replies

New York City

I really wish people would read book reviews before dashing off letters in response. Contrary to Steve Kasner, I did not argue that the Constitution is the root cause of America's most intractable problems, that a text can or should be fully self-explanatory or that rewriting the Constitution would lead us to all agree upon its meaning. After all, a democratic Constitution is one a majority agrees on, not a totality. I also did not write that "meaning stems only from the original text" but, to the contrary, argued that a text as rife with gaps and inconsistencies as the Constitution is essentially meaningless and that any attempt to make sense of it is doomed. Instead of resorting to ever more ingenious methods of interpretation, we should simply fix it, and the fact that we can't even imagine how to start is indicative of how paralyzed democracy in this country has been since its inception. A truly sovereign people would not put up with a government beyond their effective control for an instant, much less two centuries.

So Kasner might want to take another look at my review. He might also want to give *The Frozen Republic* another glance since it nowhere calls for a new constitutional convention.

Daniel Lazare

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Books & the Arts.

The Horror of Dirt

by ELAINE BLAIR

Mrs. Woolf and the Servants
An Intimate History of Domestic Life in Bloomsbury.
By Alison Light.
Bloomsbury. 376 pp. $30.

When, in 1904, Virginia and Vanessa Stephen and their two brothers left the well-appointed Kensington house of their late parents for their own place in bohemian Bloomsbury, they were full of ideas about how one should live—and think, talk, write and paint—in the new century. They wanted to escape many of the formalities of the Victorian household in which they had grown up: the heavy furniture, darkened rooms, antimacassars and formal dinners. Vanessa painted the walls of their new home white and decorated it with mirrors and Indian shawls. Living in various configurations with their friends and later their spouses and paramours, the sisters orchestrated a series of domestic experiments, scandalous to their aunts and cousins, which ranged from not using table napkins to sharing a house with unmarried men, as Virginia did with her younger brother, Adrian, and their friends John Maynard Keynes and Leonard Woolf, who would later become her husband.

The idea of having no servants, however, was never considered. Although Bloomsbury residences had some modern conveniences, such as electric light, the cooking and cleaning would still have taken two people the entire day. (The living conditions were even more primitive at country houses, so much so that the servants generally hated to work there.) The Stephen siblings brought to Bloomsbury the family's longtime cook, Sophia Farrell, and a maid, Maud Chart. This was a small staff of help by the upper-middle-class standards of the day: in the Kensington house, six or seven servants had attended to the Stephen clan, which numbered ten. By retaining Farrell and Chart, Virginia and Vanessa sought a compromise. A large staff like the one their mother had employed demanded a lot of time and effort: they would have had to hire and train the servants, resolve disputes between them and possibly supervise their work. But with too few servants, they also would have had to steal time from their writing and painting, since some housekeeping chores would have fallen to them.

Woolf did not feel rich when she was in her 20s, nor was she idle—she started earning money by writing book reviews and

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Charles Laughton's cook*
tells you how to roast beef to perfection
* By courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. Charles Laughton.
"A fillet of beef, weighing about four pounds is a favourite in our household" states Miss Nellie Boxall—Mr. & Mrs. Laughton's cook, when interviewed in her spotless little kitchen with its gleaming New World Gas Cooker of which she is very proud. "I go myself to the butcher's to choose it—I think that's important because you must have good quality meat.
"Another tip is to use plenty of fat—five to six tablespoons—because fillet of beef is, of course, lean. I set the Regulo at '7' for twenty minutes before putting in the meat. Once it is in, the New World does the rest. After about an hour and a quarter the beef is beautifully cooked." And Miss Boxall added, "I wouldn't be without my New World Gas Cooker for anything."
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An advertisement in London's *Daily Mail*, February 21, 1936

Elaine Blair is the author of Literary St. Petersburg. *Her writing has appeared in* The New York Review of Books, n+1 *and other publications.*

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articles soon after leaving home—but she and her siblings, and many of the artists and writers in their inner circle of friends, relied on some sort of unearned family money for support. When, in *A Room of One's Own*, which she wrote when she was in her 40s, Woolf identifies poverty as a central obstacle for women writers, she is talking about the relative poverty of women compared with the wealth of their husbands and brothers—men of their own class, by which she meant the middle and upper classes.

In *A Room of One's Own* Woolf also invents a hypothetical "Shakespeare's sister," who shares her brother's literary genius but dies in penniless obscurity because a woman in Elizabethan England would never have enjoyed the opportunity to exercise her talents. One can imagine another hypothetical figure, "Woolf's maid," a poor woman in Georgian England who has to work for a living from the age of 13, cleaning up after the famous writer. After all, Woolf's famous formulation that a woman writer must have £500 a year and the solitude of her own room in which to write presumes implicitly that there will be servants to make the writer's meals and clean her house. Many male writers could rely on wives to keep house—as did Dylan Thomas and Robert Graves—even when they couldn't afford servants. For an ambitious female writer, the only hope was to be able to hire poorer, less educated women to take care of her and her family's household needs.

In *Mrs. Woolf and the Servants*, a mix of social history, biography and literary criticism, Alison Light takes a sustained look at these servants and their relationships with their artistic, semibohemian, upper-middle-class employers. Though Light spends equal time upstairs and downstairs, the dominant figure of the book is Woolf. The novelist and her friends, of course, left behind a far more voluminous archive of diaries and letters than their servants did, but Woolf's central place in the book also reflects Light's literary interests. Light explains that she became curious about Bloomsbury's servants when she realized while reading Woolf's diaries how often, and how "viciously," Woolf wrote about her longtime cook, Nellie Boxall. "Virginia's relationship with Nellie was as enduring, intimate and intense as any in her life, but it was at an oblique angle to it.... Most literary critics have kept it at arm's length or shunted it off into social history." Light digs deeper into Woolf's experience with servants and pieces together the servants' stories—a method that allows her to examine, from fresh angles, the institution of domestic servitude, which intimately bound together women of different classes who thought they had little in common and often found each other baffling. Sometimes Light's subtle analysis gets lost in the sea of biographical and historical details, but it's hard to complain when the details are so interesting, forming an absorbing collective history of servants in Britain at a time when the culture of domestic service was quickly changing.

Bloomsbury's servants were part of the last two generations of live-in help in Britain. The idea of doing arduous, messy work that rich or middle-class people considered beneath them came to seem "anachronistic and demeaning," Light writes, to working-class women who "increasingly had other options: clerical, shop or factory work, work as a waitress or a chambermaid, receptionist, florist, beautician, anything that gave them their evenings or weekends off, the freedom to meet friends, or simply to stay at home." Beginning in the 1890s, the percentage of young women entering domestic service steadily declined until World War II, when it plummeted sharply. Live-in service then virtually disappeared from all but the richest households. By the 1970s, Irish women and immigrants from other parts of Europe, Asia and the Caribbean were being hired to do the work of housecleaning and baby-minding that English working-class women no longer wanted to do.

In Woolf's day, the nature of service was also changing. The typical upper-middle-class Victorian household, with its large, specialized staff of servants assigned to different household tasks, was disappearing as couples had fewer children. At the same time, more middle-class families than ever were able to afford a single servant, leading to a new kind of intimacy between servants and employers. In some ways this intimacy made domestic work even more trying: the days were lonelier, and servants found their employers' pretensions harder to stomach. As Light puts it, "handing a newspaper or the post to one's employer on a platter was standard parlourmaid practice; in a large household it might feel bearable but when there were only two at home it was humiliating."

One thing that wasn't changing rapidly was the work. Technological advances that Americans were quick to adopt—water heaters, vacuum cleaners and other time-saving devices—crept very slowly into British homes. One of the fascinations of Light's book is its scrub-by-scour account of a servant's typical day—the beating of rugs and curtains, the emptying of chamber pots, the carrying of buckets of boiling water up many flights of stairs so that the employers could have warmish baths that servants did without, and a great deal more, from dawn until late at night. The kitchen was typically in the basement, which meant cooking with very little light, often with no running hot water, on a temperamental range that needed frequent fueling and stoking.

For the servants, one comfort of Bloomsbury's social experiments, according to Light, was that they made domestic work more pleasant than it would have been in conventional households. Servants didn't have to wear uniforms, attend church, wait at tables or do a great deal of "fetching and carrying" for their employers. Many of the Bloomsbury servants stayed for years and eventually enjoyed the glamour of working for famous artists. Light writes that to most members of the upper middle class, the Bloomsbury set's relations with their servants would have appeared "unbelievably lax." They were invited to fancy-dress parties thrown by their employers and mingled with the other guests. One of the Woolfs' maids, Lottie Hope, liked to play practical jokes and "caused much hilarity one Christmas by dropping a marzipan mouse in Virginia's tea."

But the sociability and intimacy between employers and servants, the occasional bridging of the gap between classes, was superficial. By the time Virginia and Vanessa ran

Manifesto

after Breton

When I dream, I vote.

Exercise my rights
as citizen of the dream state
to terra-form the future.

Work to abolish
the most abject poverty of all—

that of knowing
only one world.

Activists, lovers—
don't just entwine your bodies,
but also dreams.

When you sleep together,
go all the way!

ELAINE EQUI

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their own households, their servants were no longer consigned to live in dismal attic or basement rooms, but assumptions of class superiority still dominated the relationship. Though Woolf and her sister had moderate leftist leanings—later in life, under the influence of her husband, Woolf would become active in the newly formed Labour Party—their political beliefs did not translate into a desire to improve the economic situation of their servants. The Woolfs paid their help the meager wages typical of the era, a shockingly small proportion of their income: according to Light, they gave their servants £40 a year when they earned £4,000.

Woolf's diaries and letters are sprinkled with careless snobbish comments about servants, and her and Vanessa's dislike of having servants shades easily into disdain for the servants themselves. They make everything "pompous and heavy-footed," Virginia writes to her sister, who in another letter complains that her "brains are becoming soft…by constant contact with the lower classes" during a vacation when her family and their servants were living in close quarters. "I am sick of the timid spiteful servant mind," Virginia wrote about Boxall. The sisters often grumble about the "necessity" of having any help at all. They want a simpler life and resent the responsibilities that go with having employees when staying in the country or traveling abroad. "The more I think of it," Vanessa wrote to Virginia, "the more it seems to me absurd that we should have, as we soon shall, 5 servants to look after a young & able-bodied couple & a baby." (Vanessa took on a larger staff after having children, but Virginia continued to live with just a cook and a maid for much of her adult life.) Virginia especially, who during her nervous breakdowns was looked after by servants and nurses supervising her eating and rest times as if she were a child, chafed at having bodily needs taken care of by another person. Servants may have been especially vexing figures for Woolf because they gave the lie to the idea of "the fully self-directed, autonomous" life that she aspired to.

Woolf found it difficult to keep her distance from servants, to give orders in a way that established her authority over them (she hated the "measured sweetness" with which servants were supposed to be addressed). Boxall, who worked for Woolf for eighteen years, was an excellent but temperamental cook, and they fought regularly, their rows leaving Woolf surprisingly unsettled and vulnerable. "She doesn't care for me, or for anything," Woolf once complained in her diary, as if talking about a school friend or

— The Stage Is Set —

For many years we, your elder brothers, have warned men* of the dangers of blindly following market forces which, themselves, are blind. Thus, the present widespread economic and financial crisis should not be unexpected. The 'bubble' created by competition and greed had, inevitably, to burst. Yet the 'men of money' who built this towering edifice on shifting sands are stunned by the outcome, are at a loss to understand the reasons for the catastrophe and are already looking for better ways of continuing the same folly.

The people of the countries worst hit by the recent events, however, know well the reasons for the collapse, and are angry in the knowledge that it is they who will suffer hardship and want in the months and years ahead.

Maitreya, waiting patiently in the wings, sees this as a 'window of opportunity' which allows him to emerge openly and begin his outer mission.

Maitreya, waiting patiently in the wings, sees this as a 'window of opportunity' which allows him to emerge openly and begin his outer mission. Thus, the long wait for his emergence is almost over. Very soon indeed now men will hear Maitreya's call for action and for change.

Already, amid the myriad analysts the media have turned to for explanation and advice in the current crisis are a few who wisely warn that radical change is essential; that control and regulation of the 'men of money' must be a top priority to prevent a repetition. The people call for fairness and justice and are in no mood to be ignored. Thus the stage is set, at last, for the words of Maitreya to be heard, and to be seen as sensible and true. He will tell men that the continuation of the present disorder will bring only further chaos; that only a complete and ordered reconstruction of the world's economic system will bring justice and peace; that without such justice and peace the future would be bleak indeed. He will tell them that we have the answer in our hands, that the world is one; that we live and prosper as one or face annihilation. These things, bit by bit, Maitreya will tell the world and the people will respond. Before their present leaders, they will see his good sense, and welcome the opportunity to put into practice his advice.

How long this phase will last is difficult to predict but, in the present chaotic conditions it may be relatively short indeed. The greedy 'men of money' have been caught out and their methods found wanting. The people who only want sufficient to raise their families in decency are more than ready for the changes and the challenges of the future. They want justice and peace and are prepared to share to achieve these precious goals. The people are ready; the 'men of money' are bewildered and are licking their wounds; Maitreya, too, is ready, and has his hand on the door.

This article, published in *Share International* magazine, was written by a Master of Wisdom. The Masters, headed by Maitreya, the World Teacher, are highly advanced teachers and advisors of humanity who are planning to work openly in the world very soon.

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a lover. She schemed for years to let Boxall go, rehearsing the scene in her mind but losing courage at the last minute, or being won over by Boxall's attempts at peacemaking. Boxall gave and retracted notice dozens of times. She was high-strung and insecure: the parallels with Woolf's disposition are hard to miss. She looked to Woolf for approval and easily felt slighted. Woolf rarely records the precise substance of Boxall's grievances (and Boxall left no record), but many of them seem to have had to do with not getting enough attention from her employer, or with being asked to do tasks that she considered beneath her or too strenuous.

Her relationship with Boxall, Woolf wrote in her diary in 1929, would make a great subject for a novel. But there was nothing like it in her fiction, despite her regular attempts to include more of what she calls "low life scenes" in her work. Light looks at Woolf's early efforts to create servant characters, such as Chailey in *The Voyage Out*, a longtime servant for the Vinrace family in her 50s, who is grieving over the death of her mistress. Though Woolf is an astute critic of other writers' sentimental working-class characters, her portraits of servants, many of them unpublished (she was conscious of their limitations), tend to be versions of the sentimental or pathetic "old retainer" who overidentifies with her employer's family and has no independent inner life.

Servants appear fleetingly in Woolf's novels as enthusiastic helpers or symbolic figures.

Otherwise, servants appear in her novels fleetingly, never fully conscious; they tend to be willing and enthusiastic helpers of their mistresses or heavily symbolic figures, like Mrs. McNab in *To the Lighthouse*, the cleaning woman who beats back the wilderness that has taken over the Ramsay family's property so that they can re-enter the novel, reoccupy their house and resume their family drama. Early drafts of *The Waves* incorporated voices of characters from across the social spectrum, including that of a kitchen maid, but Woolf later edited them out and limited the novel to six upper-middle-class characters who refer to their servants only in passing. It's not clear exactly why she did so, and Light wonders if she realized "how much her characterization was tinged with revulsion." One excised scene had Florrie, the kitchen maid, comforting herself after being scolded by eating "a great lump of greasy white heavenly fat"—an image that would have been disgusting to Woolf, with her distaste for descriptions of eating and other bodily functions. In her diaries, too, she wasn't able—or didn't bother—to make a more coherent narrative of her relationship with Boxall, to explain it to herself honestly. "There was no development in the scenes with Nellie," Light observes; "they merely repeated."

Even as the Woolfs earned more money, they continued to whittle down their already modest staff. They let their maid Lottie Hope go in 1924, leaving them only with Boxall, and in the end she was not spared either: Woolf finally dismissed her in 1934. After a brief spell with another live-in servant, Virginia and Leonard made do for the first time without live-in help, hiring only a "daily," a maid who came for a few hours each day to do the cleaning and some of the cooking, and a gardener to look after the grounds of their country house, where they spent most of their time. The Woolfs exulted in the new sense of peace and privacy, which seems, among other things, a testament to the uncomfortable intimacy of their relationship with their servants and the considerable emotional energy that living with servants demanded of them. Virginia learned to cook and shop for groceries; she mentions her homemade dinners frequently in her letters with some pride and irony at finding herself in the role of a busy housewife. Her meals became increasingly more sophisticated. In the afternoons the Woolfs had the house to themselves: for the first time in their lives, well into middle age, they were completely alone together. They were triumphant, Virginia reveling in the freedom of "eating one's dinner off a table anywhere, having cooked it previously."

As her emotional state deteriorated in the last months of her life, Woolf, encouraged by her husband and her doctor, did even more work around the house. She told her doctor that she liked to scrub floors when she was having trouble writing, because "it took her mind off." Light says that at one point, "Virginia spent two hours carpet-beating, then watched as the flakes of dust continued to flock down on to the books she had just dusted. 'I'd no notion,' she wrote to [her friend] Ethel [Smyth], 'having always a servant, of the horror of dirt.'" Woolf spent the last morning of her life helping her daily do the dusting.

Light compares Woolf and Boxall to a mutually dependent couple, but the evidence for such an attachment seems tenuous, or at least hard to separate from the economic entanglements that bound them. And it's hard to know just how much weight to give to the fact that it was Boxall, and not someone else, who drew the curtains and cooked the roasts during the most productive years of Woolf's career. It seems part of the cruel logic of servitude that the servant, who in some ways takes over the traditional work of a wife, is precisely not able to exert the kind of influence over her mistress that a wife does over her husband, or to serve as a muse to the writer who employs her. Despite the greater intimacy and informality of Bloomsbury, a servant still seems most appreciated when she does her work unobtrusively and cheerfully, and she is otherwise replaceable—however long it might take her boss to get up the nerve to fire her.

Of course, employers were also replaceable. After she was dismissed by the Woolfs, Boxall found a job that suited her even better, working for actors Charles Laughton and Elsa Lanchester, friends of the Woolfs who had a flat in Gordon Square. They had the latest modern kitchen appliances and flush toilets, they seemed to have no trouble getting along with Boxall and they were more glamorous than the Woolfs, hosting fellow stars Douglas Fairbanks Jr. and Marlene Dietrich and other film and theater luminaries.

Light describes former domestic servants in the 1950s and '60s looking back on their old lives as if from a hangover. Social changes had come so quickly and definitively that the culture of service and subservience they had taken for granted as young women seemed impossibly antiquated: "When they looked back in old age the girls who had gone into service were often mystified, sometimes furious or appalled, that they had emptied those earth-closets, scrubbed the stone flags, washed their employers' clothes."

Boxall's later years weren't so gloomy. When Laughton and Lanchester moved to California in 1939, Boxall returned to her native Surrey to work in a hospital canteen and live with her brother and Lottie Hope. She was middle-aged by then and had saved enough money to buy a house, one of the first people in her neighborhood to do so (and also the first to have an indoor toilet put in). Her great-niece and neighborhood children remember her as seeming like "a lady" and "a notch higher in her manner" than their families, and also as very bossy, "a forceful character," perhaps finally able to express a part of her personality that she had necessarily suppressed for years. ■

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O GLOBO

Susan Stewart, 2000

Lullaby

by ANGE MLINKO

In October 2006, ten Amish schoolgirls were shot—five killed—when a local milk truck driver, armed with guns and gear for bondage and torture, invaded their schoolhouse near Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The victims ranged in age from 6 to 13. In a nation where sensational outbursts of violence are accepted as one of the costs of living in our sweet land of liberty, these children might as well have died in an interstate pileup. There is no expectation that their names will stand for anything, or be memorialized, outside their community.

You will read their names, however, in Susan Stewart's new collection of poems, *Red Rover*. In a dirge situated midway through the book, she turns them into an incantation:

> *Lena, Mary Liz, and Anna Mae*
> *Marian, Naomi Rose*
> when time has stopped
> where time has slowed
> the horses wear the rain
>
> *Mary Liz, Anna Mae, Marian*
> *Naomi Rose and Lena*
> the lanterns lit
> at midday dark
> pain's processional

"Elegy Against the Massacre at the Amish School in West Nickel Mines, Pennsylvania, Autumn 2006" uses language as stark and plain as hymns. This tragedy might hold a particular poignancy for Stewart. Now an English professor at Princeton and an important theorist of poetry and aesthetics (in books such as *The Open Studio* and *Poetry and the Fate of the Senses*), she was once a child of the southern Pennsylvania countryside. She grew up observing the Amish; her love of the soft landscape they cohabited has become fused, in her poetry, with the tradition of the English pastoral lyric. One of her earliest poems, "Letter Full of Blue Dresses," from her first book, *Yellow Stars and Ice* (1981), points to this influence—and feels eerily premonitory:

> Now the long evenings begin.
> Two Amish girls are running
> on the far side of the meadow.
> A milk bucket joins their arms,
> splashes frost on the thistle weeds.
> Their dresses wrap around
> their legs like ancient bruises, once
> blue, now purple and black. Each
> braid slaps the wind's face,
> each thin leg stabs the frost.

Having grown up in one world and residing, now, in another, Stewart takes this autobiographical fact as a starting point for her meditations. Keeping in mind that the etymology of "poet" is simply "maker," and that the mother of the Muses is Mnemosyne, goddess of memory, Stewart explores our insatiable desire to remember and make meaning out of this remembering. The Amish girls of her early poem are living embodiments of a cultural past that refuses to vanish as well as emblems of her childhood, which is irretrievably gone. Stewart's elegiac bent has broadened, over time, from the personal lyric of "Letter Full of Blue Dresses" to what might be called the cultural lyric. Fewer and fewer of her poems reference what she alone remembers; they are about what you and I remember. Her great poem "The Forest," from 1995, seemed to mark the turning point:

> You should lie down now and
> remember the forest,
> for it is disappearing—
> no, the truth is it is gone now
> and so what details you can bring back
> might have a kind of life.

This valediction comes, of course, at a time of vast deforestation. And in "Apple," from *Columbarium* (2003), she wrote:

> If I could come back from the dead,
> I would come back
> for an apple, and just for the first
> bite, the first
> break, and the cold sweet grain
> against the roof of the mouth, as plain
> and clear as water.
>
> Some apple names are almost
> forgotten
> and the apples themselves are gone.
> The smokehouse,
> winesap and York imperial, the
> striped
> summer rambo and the winter
> banana, the little
> Rome with its squat rotunda and the
> pound apple
>
> that pulled the boughs to the ground.

The first stanza could be a translation from the Greek, so austere and ancient it seems; the second stanza, offering a catalog of apple varieties, some of them lost, could only have been written in recent times, when "doomsday" seed vaults are hidden in the Arctic to safeguard crop diversity and DNA banks are urged to store the genetic information of a mounting number of endangered species.

Stewart has called herself "one of the slowest poets" and deems our culture's emphasis on speed "the enemy of difficulty." Her previous book, the majestic *Columbarium*, was eight years in the making. Happily, we didn't have to wait so long for its follow-up. *Columbarium* took as its epigraph the passage in Plato's *Theaetetus* where the soul is compared to an aviary full of birds: "Now let us make in each soul a sort of aviary of all kinds of birds.... Then we must say that when we are children this receptacle is empty; and by the birds we must understand pieces of knowledge." *Red Rover*, too, opens with a poem about birds and thinking, "The Owl":

> I thought somehow a piece of cloth
> was tossed
> into the night, a piece of cloth that
> flew
>
> up, then across, beyond the window.

Red Rover
By Susan Stewart.
Chicago. 105 pp. $22.

Ange Mlinko's most recent book is Starred Wire. *She lives in New York's Hudson Valley.*

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A tablecloth or handkerchief, a knot

somehow unfolding, folded, pushing through
the thickness of the dark. I thought somehow

a piece of cloth was lost beyond the line–
released, although it seemed as if a knot
still hung, unfolding.

This is a description of the mind grappling with a problem—a knot—and a literal description of peripheral vision. The visual artist Spencer Finch (another bird!) did something analogous when he painted images from a butterfly guide out of the corner of his eye, resulting in slashes of color that came closer to the spirit of a butterfly than a detailed rendering could have. That is just one example of the sort of perceptual exploration for which Stewart has sought analogues in poetry. *Poetry and the Fate of the Senses* took a long look at how poets through history have discovered and depicted new perceptual knowledge, and it is immediately apparent to a reader of that book that "The Owl," with its squinting through the winter dark, belongs to the nocturne tradition begun with "A Nocturnal Upon St. Lucy's Day" by John Donne and "A Nocturnal Reverie" by Anne Finch (a relation in spirit, at least, to Spencer). The purpose of the nocturnal form is to accent, like chiaroscuro, what we can and can't see. In the end, Stewart hazards, the piece of cloth she glimpses from the corner of her eye may be a snowy owl—incidentally, the owl is Minerva's mascot and Hegel's symbol of wisdom revealed only in hindsight.

I called this poem "the owl,"
the name that, like a key, locked out the dark

and later let me close my book and sleep
a winter dream. And yet the truth remains

that I can't know just what I saw, and if
it comes each night, each dream, each star, or not

at all. It's not, it's never, evident
that waiting has no reason. The circuit of the world
belies the chaos of its forms—(the kind

of thing astronomers

look down to write
in books).

Night is a great boon to poetry. Both science and religion seek to shed light and shore up certainties; perhaps poetry alone reserves a positive value for darkness, as when John Keats famously wrote that great achievement can be reached only when a poet "is capable of being in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact & reason." Much of Red Rover, like Stewart's other books, is suffused with darkness. From "The Erl King":

The father carries his child
before him, through darkness, chest to

chest, like a shield.
And the child hears a voice within the wind,
a voice the father cannot hear.

This endemic darkness may be a symptom of the time in which it was written, a time of mass extinctions and wars for dwindling resources, but as we see in "The Owl," it also allows for meditation on what we can and can't see; what we can and can't know; perhaps, too, it is the darkness of a primordial chaos in which new forms are born. If a poet's achievement—a making born of memory—is the positive outcome of doubt and uncertainty, then by situating the lyric in darkness, Stewart puts her audience in the role of the poet on the threshold of making. She challenges us to imagine ourselves as remakers of a damaged world.

Keats was thinking about Shakespeare when he wrote his letter on "uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts," but these qualities are associated with the earliest poems in English—Anglo-Saxon gnomic poems, dream poems (Stewart translates one, "The Dream of the Rood," for *Red Rover*) and riddles. Today a riddle is simply an entertainment for children. But isn't all child's play meaning-making? Stewart devotes a sequence to children's games—shadow play, king of the hill, tag and, of course, red rover—to recover this knowledge, which is often sensory knowledge deeply bound to natural rhythms. "Games From Children" falls under the section titled "Spring Forward, Fall Back." From the "I lost… I found" structure in "my mother's garden," to "I made a fist/and it grew two ears" ("Shadowplay"), to the symbology of "home" in tag, to the mimicry of war in red rover, she shows how our play encodes the eternal recurrence of the seasons; the roundness of earth and its orbit; the codependence of birth and death; and the pattern of dialogue and relay. Our senses, our bodies, are conscious of things our conscious minds are not. Not only are there things we will never know; there are things we don't know we know. In "the names," Stewart weaves these conundrums into song:

What name shall I give to thee?
What name shall I compare to thee?

anise bee and *cherry*
dark and *egg* and *free*
ghost hand and *icicle*
jinx and *kiss* and *lea*
many none and *other*
pain question row
sadness tree unusual
verity and *woe*
x I signed,
a *yawn* and *zed*,
and then I went to bed.

This list poem is a cosmos in shorthand. Its alphabetical ordering of a range of concrete and abstract nouns suggests Adam and Prospero, magic and games. The power inhering in a cosmos gives rigor even to the grief in "Elegy Against the Massacre at the Amish School in West Nickel Mines, Pennsylvania, Autumn 2006." You'll notice that the repetition of the girls' names forms a refrain, but the order of the names keeps changing. Even mourning must partake of the circle game. The circle is a boundary against chaos.

Stewart's investigation of our shared experience of nature, childhood, our bodies and our senses is one way to call attention to our humanity without nostalgia and without taking oppositional stances against modernity. Her translation of Chaucer's ironically timeless "The Former Age" and her chilling allegory of Roanoke, "The Lost Colony," suggest that the past was always-already much like the present. What we have in common with one another right now, right here, including the disputed territory of memory, is the crucial work of the imagination. When Stewart helps us remember the victims of West Nickel Mines, she is helping us remember those wasted girlhoods through the imagery—horses, lanterns, calves, hay—of English pastoral lyric, and the community whence they came, the Amish farmers who abided by their Christianity so seriously that they publicly forgave the murderer's family. This act made headlines; for weeks, pundits debated the pros and cons of forgiveness. Writing in *New Literary History* in 2005, Stewart declared, "When the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established, its stance against revenge was, I believe, as world-shaking as the previous transformation of the Furies into the Eumenides that is recorded in the *Oresteia*."

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The quaint Amish took this stance centuries ahead of progressive South Africans. What do we see and not see? What do we know and not know?—here these prove to be the burning questions. The darkness that the Amish choose by rejecting electricity is merely the darkness of nightfall, an ordinary limit. But by rejecting the darkness inside us, they have demonstrated how another light can be a boundless good.

It's no accident that Stewart places the lyric "Wrens" immediately after her dirge:

their tumbling joy
decanted descanting
over cobble
stones in and out
of firethorn back
and forth to gingko
who knows
who will
ever know
what net
binds them
loosening
song?
I would not
lose them
could not lose
them know
if there's
another
place another
world another life
there must be wrens.

This poem, more poignant for being paired with an elegy for slain children, expresses love for a world where the open-ended play of a wren (its jagged, coruscating swoops enacted in the poem's line breaks) is an absolute value. In fact, Stewart refuses any paradise that does not contain this wren. And yet she does so with the fierce gentleness of a George Herbert, a Henry Vaughan or a Thomas Traherne, who said, "Love is the true means by which the world is enjoyed: our love to others, and others' love to us." Is there room in the future for wrens, much less Traherne? At the close of *Poetry and the Fate of the Senses*, Stewart acknowledged that we may be on the threshold of the posthuman: a species having more in common with machines than wrens. "Perhaps I am writing at the end of a world." Perhaps the new world will have less pain, less death in it. It's hard to imagine that this will be so, when the cause of so much of our carelessness is our inability to recognize ourselves. What we most fail to see, again and again, is our own faces. But what we cannot fail to hear, in *Red Rover*, is a wise and troubled lullaby for what may yet prove to be the infancy of our species. ■

BULLIT MARQUEZ/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Porters waiting to weigh tuna in General Santos City in the Philippines, 2005

Hooked

by EMILY BIUSO

In *The Odyssey*, Homer depicts the cruel and vindictive nature of the sea through the figure of Poseidon. It's the sea god who prevents Odysseus from returning home, provoking a severe storm with his trident after Odysseus has blinded his son, Polyphemus. Homer called Poseidon the "shaker of the earth" and the sea, and not insignificantly he was also a fertility spirit who dealt in the ocean's barrenness.

If Poseidon was still a part of our climate, the depletion of the ocean's fish would surely have earned his wrath, and he would likely wonder how we came to be so blind to this tragedy. More than a decade ago, Mark Kurlansky wrote a book that meticulously traced the collapse of one fish population: the North Atlantic cod. After the explorer John Cabot made his transatlantic voyages to North America in 1497, he observed that the coast of Newfoundland was so thick with cod that schools of them could be scooped up from the sea with weighted baskets. By the mid-1990s, as Kurlansky explains in *Cod*, Gloucester, Massachusetts, had only about 400 working fishermen, down from 2,000 in the 1950s, when cod were more plentiful. In 1994, having estimated that the current fleet was about twice as large as what the fish stocks could sustain, the National Marine Fisheries Service levied harsh regulations and strict catch quotas on cod fishermen. Two years earlier, the Canadian government had issued a complete moratorium on fishing cod in Newfoundland and Labrador. There were barely any cod left. Since then, there have been stirrings of a slightly revitalized population: the head of the fish conservation group at a Newfoundland university recently returned from a scientific voyage to cautiously report some healthy, promising behavior among cod. Still, it is hard to imagine how the species could return to the level of ubiquity it used to enjoy generations ago, let alone in Cabot's day.

Tuna is another population blighted by overfishing. According to some estimates, commercial fishing of bluefin tuna has reduced populations by as much as 90 percent in the past thirty years. The insatiable sushi market in Japan and increasing popularity of the fish elsewhere is the main cause of the depletion; demand is so intense that a 350-pound bluefin will fetch $120 a pound at

Emily Biuso is on the editorial staff of The New York Times Magazine.

The Last Fish Tale
The Fate of the Atlantic and Survival in Gloucester, America's Oldest Fishing Port and Most Original Town.
By Mark Kurlansky.
Ballantine. 269 pp. $25.

Tuna
A Love Story.
By Richard Ellis.
Knopf. 319 pp. $27.95.

Bottomfeeder
How to Eat Ethically in a World of Vanishing Seafood.
By Taras Grescoe.
Bloomsbury. 327 pp. $24.99.

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Japan's biggest and most famous fish market, Tsukiji. The World Wildlife Fund called for an immediate closure of all Mediterranean tuna fisheries in the eastern Atlantic a couple of years ago because "Atlantic bluefin tuna stocks risk imminent commercial collapse." The fishing industry, a business that employs 200 million people and brings in $71 billion a year, has ignored this plea. In today's global economy, international fishing conglomerates, modern trade policy and fish markets and restaurants willing to pay exorbitant prices form the trident that rules the sea.

Fish consumption worldwide is double what it was three decades ago, and while it's possible to track the volume of fish caught, sold and swallowed, it's still impossible to determine with a high degree of certainty how much is left swimming free, since there has never been a fish census. But it's hard to refute the fact that when the average catch dwindles to such a point as to put large sections of the industry out of business, fish populations are shrinking rapidly. As Kurlansky writes in his new book, *The Last Fish Tale*, "There is one certainty. Something huge—a massive shifting in the natural order of the planet—is occurring in the oceans, and with it will come tremendous biological and social changes." Yet the mystery of the ocean and the lack of hard data allow vested interests to continue to insist—whether out of sincerity or willful ignorance—that this shift is just a blip on the radar. "Most fishermen, based on centuries of anecdotal family experience, believe that fish are cyclical," Kurlansky writes. "They disappear for a time and then they come back." But many experts believe that overfishing has been so costly that stocks will never fully recover. The Food and Agriculture Organization recently reported that 60 percent of the fish species studied by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization are either fully exploited or depleted; one respected scientist estimates that most of the world's fish stocks will be severely depleted by 2048. And with so few fish for the taking, what will become of the fishermen?

In *The Last Fish Tale*, Kurlansky tries to fathom the mystery by limiting his focus to a single, beleaguered fishing town, Gloucester. The town has most recently attracted attention for the was-it-or-wasn't-it "pregnancy pact." But for many years Gloucester was known as an unofficial fishing capital of the Eastern Seaboard: the source of Gorton's fish sticks, the setting for Sebastian Junger's *The Perfect Storm* and the subsequent movie, and the home of a close-knit community of Portuguese and Sicilian immigrants. The Portuguese dominated the Gloucester fishing fleets for the first half of

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the twentieth century, and more than half of today's fishermen are Sicilian or descendants of Sicilians. The town was also a settlement for several artist colonies that drew on the ships and ocean for inspiration.

Kurlansky is fascinated by ships as well, tracing the evolution of the Gloucester fishing industry from dory fishing (sending men out in rowboats from a larger craft) to the eventual dominance of bottom trawlers (huge vessels that drag cone-shaped nets across the ocean floor and capture and destroy everything in their path). In the old days, Kurlansky tells us, "improved technology was usually directed at increasing catches and not at improving safety." Between 1830 and 1900, the "golden age of the Gloucester schooner," 3,800 Gloucester fishermen and 670 Gloucester boats were lost to the ocean; Kurlansky estimates that 10,000 Gloucester fishermen may have perished at sea since the early 1600s. Until the twenty-first century, the community was entirely fish-based; those who didn't go out on the boats worked on the docks as "lumpers" chopping ice, unloading boats and operating forklifts. Policemen and firefighters worked part-time as lumpers for supplementary income, and children earned pocket change by putting nets in boxes. Though Gloucester was by and large a community of Catholic immigrants (by 1900, 40 percent of the town's inhabitants were immigrants, a number that continued to swell), they did not look kindly on newcomers.

According to Kurlansky, the currents of the fishing crisis can be traced back to ancient fishing practices in the North Sea, when countries that bordered its waters engaged in cutthroat competition to haul in record catches. In England, where "dragging nets was an old idea," fishermen unsuccessfully petitioned Parliament to ban the practice because it swept up sea life indiscriminately—this in 1376, 300 years after Vikings were thought to have landed in the Gloucester area. Trawling was a major fishing technique in the North Sea by 1774, and it only got worse after that. Kurlansky tells us that bottom trawlers were presciently opposed by Gloucester fishermen in the 1880s because "it was a bad idea, that it took too many fish and would damage the ocean floor." Because of its astonishing efficiency—trawlers differ in size and capacity, but some are floating factories outfitted with engines of up to 5,000 horsepower and nets a mile long—trawling became the norm in the North Atlantic by the mid-1970s. The New England fishing industry united to support the passage of a law that banned international fishing boats. This cut down on trawling, since it was the foreign conglomerates that, by and large, could afford the huge rigs. But instead of initiating conservation programs at this point (as Iceland and Norway did after establishing exclusive fishing rights in their waters), American fishermen used the opportunity to loot the stocks more than ever. Domestic trawling still occurs, and in the end, as a Gloucester fisherman told Kurlansky, "The technology ruined it. It made fishermen too on-the-money. Fish don't have a chance." By "it," of course, he means the thrill of the hunt; but the technology simultaneously ruined the fish stocks. Capturing the local character is Kurlansky's strength, and it's what makes *The Last Fish Tale* a moving tribute to Gloucester's disappearing mores.

Richard Ellis's *Tuna* also pays homage to a fading idol: the Atlantic bluefin tuna. Though the book provides a comprehensive look at yellowfins, skipjack and albacore, it is the bluefin that holds Ellis's gaze. We quickly learn why: it is the largest, fastest and most threatened variety of the species, all because of the world's (and especially Japan's) ever increasing sushi diet. The cruel realities of economics make conservation a Sisyphean exercise: a two-ounce piece of bluefin can cost $75 in a Tokyo sushi restaurant.

The liveliest parts of *Tuna* cover the struggle between the public's expanding appetite for tuna and the looming reality of dwindling stocks. Bluefin caught on the coast of eastern Canada and New England went for pennies per pound in the 1960s. In the early '70s the Japanese discovered the huge bluefin there, and the market took off. As Ellis writes, "Fish that had brought forty dollars two years earlier were now worth a thousand. Soon the price of a single 'giant' shot up to tens of thousands of dollars. When Atlantic coast fishermen found that they could earn a year's pay in an afternoon, the uncontrolled slaughter of [what one scientist termed] 'the cocaine of the sea' began." Japan now imports about 60,000 tons of the fish, and the North Atlantic breeding populations are thought to have dwindled about 90 percent over the past two decades. In 1991 Sweden proposed listing the bluefin as endangered because of damage to the stocks; the measure was immediately vetoed by Japan and the United States, both of which have chosen immediate economic interest over the bluefin's survival.

Ellis introduces readers to one solution to this increasing disequilibrium between demand and supply: tuna ranches, where schools of young tuna are captured and fattened in huge pens before being wrestled onto a platform; then a metal spike is driven through their brains. (Alternatively, herds of the fish are corralled into the pen's cor-

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ner, where they become the bull's-eye of a rifle shooter. Remarks Ellis: "'Shooting fish in a barrel' indeed.") *Tuna* is far more comprehensive than this, though: it also offers a complete summation of all the current scientific knowledge about tuna and a history of sport fishing by Ernest Hemingway and compatriots.

By turns elegiac and angry, Kurlansky and Ellis examine the recklessness of the fishing industry and how a combination of factors (among them industrialization, technology and fishing quotas) have inevitably harmed fish and the people who make their living from them. It's a point well taken, and I wish the authors—such obvious experts and fans of fish and fishermen—had pursued their subject into deeper waters. One impediment is that while neither Kurlansky nor Ellis is an industry apologist, both have such obvious love for fishermen that they hesitate to put the blame for dwindling catches too squarely on their shoulders, as if there weren't enough blame to go around. A second impediment is the choice of explaining the fishing crisis by examining one type of fish, and one specific town. It's so boring—and in light of current tastes in publishing, as predictable as the yarn about the big fish that got away. In an exasperated piece for *The New York Times Book Review* late last year, Joe Queenan eviscerated books that view history through a single, quotidian object, fuming that such works "argue that without cod, salt, booze or the penalty kick, we would not be where we are today. This is true, though the same could be said about tuna, cocaine, beavers, coriander, the infield-fly rule and the 'going out of business' sale. These books settle arguments no one is having. It's like writing a book called 'How Annoying Roommates Changed the World.' Yes, annoying roommates—Robespierre, Marlon Brando, Al Gore—have changed the world. So what?"

Kurlansky's *Cod* is a shining example of this genre, and it enjoyed critical accolades—the *New York Times* hailed its "history filtered through the gills of the fish trade"—and runaway sales. But considering that parts of *The Last Fish Tale* are warmed-over portions of *Cod*, it appears that there is no bigger fan of Kurlansky's work than Kurlansky himself. In some ways, the overlap was inevitable; Gloucester, after all, has made an industry of cod, so a book about the town can't *not* be a book about Kurlansky's own cash cow. But anecdotes made memorable in *Cod* lose their luster upon retelling (even with a bit more detail) in *The Last Fish Tale*. One example is the story of Howard Blackburn, a beloved fisherman who rows the corpse of his frozen dory mate 100 miles in a snowstorm, his hands frozen around the oars, positioned just so to be able to continue rowing after losing feeling in his fingers. It certainly is a sobering tale about the toughness of cod fishing and the resilience of the hearty Gloucester breed of fishermen. You can almost understand why Kurlansky recycled it. Except: Blackburn was from Nova Scotia, and he was fishing for halibut in Newfoundland.

As much as Kurlansky loves the traditional fisherman and mourns his downfall, Ellis seeks to memorialize the tuna. (Both men drew illustrations of their favored subjects to be included in their books.) Early on, Ellis explains that "when writing about tuna, it is almost impossible to control one's admiration for these marvelous creatures." Indeed, far too much of Ellis's book is ardent stenography of figures and facts about his favored fish, with compliments tucked in at every turn ("the word 'magnificent' is often applied to the bluefins, and it is exquisitely applicable"). Though everything you might ever want to know about a tuna is contained here (bluefin have the ability to raise the temperature of their eyes and brain?), the book suffers from a lack of firsthand reporting. Ellis does visit an Australian tuna farm and stops at the famous Tsukiji fish market in Tokyo (now a required destination for authors writing about tuna and sustainability issues in search of requisite local color). But far more typical of his reporting is this sentence: "A Google search for 'Japanese restaurants Sydney' on July 10, 2006, listed seventy-four in that city and its suburbs, so it is reasonable to assume that some of the tuna now being caught in Australian waters remains there." There's a lot of summarizing of newspaper articles and scientific reports, cushioned by bursts of adoration, where firsthand reporting would smell fresher.

If you set aside Kurlansky's romantic portrait of the fisherman, is it possible to plumb the mystery of the ocean's barrenness, or at least understand how to cope with it? This is the approach of Taras Grescoe in *Bottomfeeder*, a comprehensive, lively and illuminating guide on how "to eat ethically in a world of vanishing seafood." In ten chapters, Grescoe visits ten locations—from China to Canada—that are ground zero of a particular breed of threatened fish. Though he aims to provide an instruction manual for perplexed seafood lovers who worry that their menus will irrevocably harm the oceans, he does more than that, in fact making sense of ten complicated tales of endangered fish all around the globe.

Grescoe's search for an ethos of sustainable seafood yields a mixed bag of results: after visiting shrimp farms in India that he

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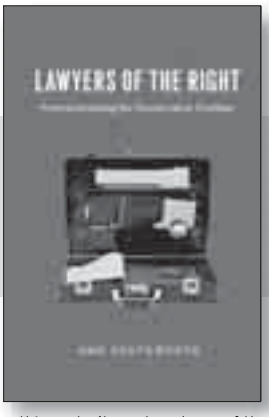

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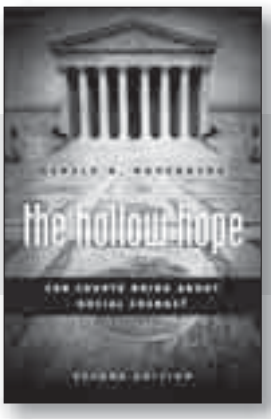

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believes raise "all-you-can-eat antibiotics," he decides that cheap shrimp is "a meal I could no longer afford." In Brittany he buys a can of sardines that lists the boat that caught them, the date the catch occurred and the port where they were offloaded. A simple description on the can is, for Grescoe, "a revelation," and the easiest way to figure out if a can's contents have been harvested ethically—a simple Google search of the boat or the port can provide a wealth of information.

His roving reporting is entertaining and smart, and he has an eye for detail. Reading William Warner's Pulitzer Prize–winning *Beautiful Swimmers*, he finds a nugget that gets to the heart of the tragedy of fishermen and their dying industry. In a chapter about Chesapeake oysters, Grescoe quotes Warner on fishing in Maryland. As one of the besieged watermen told a government biologist preaching conservation, "There is something you don't understand.... These here communities on the shore, our little towns here on the island and over to the mainland, was all founded on the right of free plunder. If you follow the water, that's how it was and that's how it's got to be."

Though Kurlansky is a good anthropologist of fishing communities and Ellis a capable researcher, neither so bluntly captures the pervasiveness of this stubborn and dangerous truth. Nobody wants to change—not the fishermen, not the restaurants that make a killing off *toro* and not us, the fish-consuming public. Maybe that's why Grescoe's book stands a bit above *Tuna* and *The Last Fish Tale*: amid the changing climate, technology and trade regulations that have exacerbated the problem of overfishing, he illustrates how human attitudes toward fish have remained the same.

It shouldn't surprise us that the mythologizing of the ocean and fetishization of its mystery has led to a point where one takes it for granted. In seeing the sea for what it is—a malleable, fragile ecosystem and finite natural resource—one can form a new relationship with it, a connection that doesn't tilt the scales toward our insatiable appetites for more. And as Grescoe suggests, a good way to combat this mystery is with transparency of production and more informative labeling about where, exactly, our fish used to swim and how it was caught. And with so many popular fish populations nearly decimated, we must realize that some seafood is a luxury rather than a guarantee; we simply have to stop eating certain species if they are to recover. Admitting the real cost of our all-you-can-eat shrimp platters is the first step. Only then can we be assured an honest meal—one that just might be available for years to come. ■

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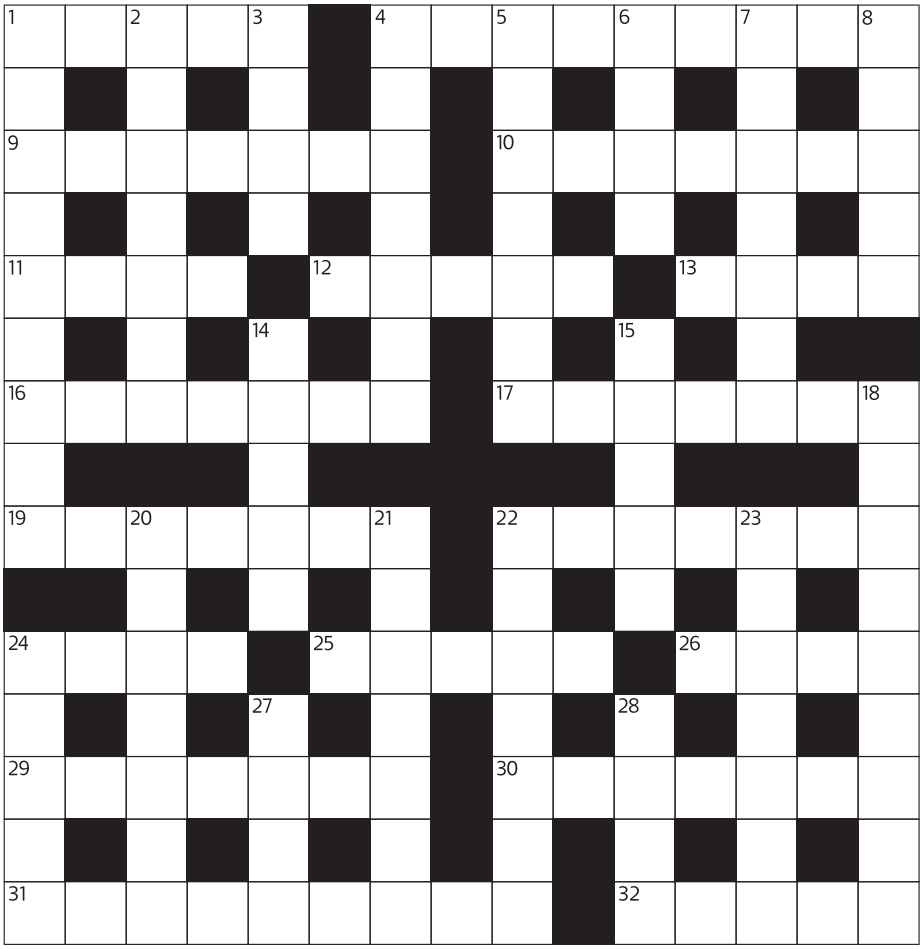

ACROSS

1 and **4** Two things a lineman must be able to do with hoisting equipment. (5,3,6)

9 The mail that's not in your in-basket, possibly—where the recipient is far away. (7)

10 Such trading might not be approved of, being not out on the team, right? (7)

11 The wrong mode for the top of the building, possibly. (4)

12 Sold a variety of heavy things to cart around. (5)

13 Was Tim so like the woodman to your beginning? (4)

16 Make your debut, when the answer is not a way to get in. (4,3)

17 Throws into gear, possibly, with a wise-crack perhaps seen to occur about it. (7)

19 Frightened? That's about right! (Though showing the results of a wound.) (7)

22 Suburbanite who runs back and forth, but one possibly stumbles. (7)

24 It's the wrong road for a girl who is so often called dumb. (4)

25 In alarum, be roused to find this may be raw or burnt. (5)

26 Not up at the bottom of 24, say. (4)

29 Poetic gleamers—ten of them being in the Roman legion. (7)

30 Play false with the lover more than once? (3-4)

31 The exact spot is not indicated, therefore I objectively have a point at this location. (9)

32 One invited to your house might wax poetic. (5)

DOWN

1 Something special given at the wharves, or other really out-of-the-way locations. (9)

2 It's the very best sort of pot, with one little flower. (7)

3 See 22

4 Dramatizes *Cats*, possibly, but not in the end. (4,3)

5 Led the wrong way around what Boreas is responsible for, to gradually disappear. (7)

6 For example, Gore ends up thus, too. (4)

7 I'd get a lousy mark when the ruler is about to be making a joke of things. (7)

8 Not a late Civil War general, certainly! (5)

14 A slinky type, but a little firm with support for some ladies. (5)

15 Find a winning portion once more. (5)

18 A little way repeated around the group of hills, which is most odd! (9)

20 A supporter of 14 with one who wants all eyes upon him proves to be one who found favor with Jehovah. (7)

21 Seem wrong when the end is misplaced about it—with possession of land as one's own. (7)

22 and **3** Pulls two strings together, and gets hooked, as they say. (4,3,4)

23 Give all the elements, yet get nothing with the sign of victory, in what is said to come before fall. (7)

24 Avoids getting "quackers"? (5)

27 What boasters do, getting the bird. (4)

28 Don't stop! That's no good, and will get you a loud noisemaker! (4)

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■	P	E	A	S	A	N	T	S	■	F	O	S	S	E
D	■	R	■	■	■	E	■	U	■	C	■	■	■	A
A	B	S	O	R	B	E	R	S	■	O	F	T	E	N
P	■	H	■	O	■	D	■	P	■	U	■	H	■	T
P	R	O	D	U	C	E	■	I	S	R	A	E	L	I
L	■	O	■	T	■	D	■	R	■	S	■	T	■	M
E	N	T	R	E	E	■	R	E	N	E	G	A	D	E

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WARNING: IS YOUR MEMORY FADING?

Breakthrough medical research reveals "forgotten moments" may be caused by "brain starvation"

You may be able to avoid long-term issues if you act before it's too late. Leading medical researchers reveal discovery that triggers body's own production of mental "superfuel" and may help reverse the damage caused by stress and age.

Do you remember your first kiss but not where you left your car keys? You're not alone. Millions are discovering that as they age, their short term memory and mental sharpness seem to be slipping. The cause of these inconvenient "gaps" in memory sits deep inside your brain, among the billions of tiny nerve connections. New brain cell growth starts dropping after age 25, and then dramatically after 50, starting a downward spiral that can lead to everything from those frustrating "senior moments" to even more severe memory breakdowns.

Downward Memory Spiral is Reversible

Studies have shown that the efficiency of brain cells declines after years of free radical damage and stress. It was long believed that as we got older, memory problems were inevitable. But medical experts have revealed that **the downward memory spiral is reversible.** Compelling new research shows that there's a simple way to stimulate new brain cell growth that can boost your memory, improve your focus and restore your mind's mental sharpness.

Achieve Peak Brain Performance

Challenging mental games aren't enough to build a better brain. Your mind is the most complex and demanding organ in your body. It's also a high-performance supercomputer that requires the right chemical "foods" to perform at its peak.

One of the brain's most important nutrients is choline. Choline is a substance in our body that our brain desperately needs to help manufacture new cells and improve vital neurotransmitters (the basic processes of thinking and memory). Until now, it was believed that there was no way to safely and naturally produce this remarkable mental "superfuel." But after years of extensive research and testing, microbiologists and brain researchers at the University of North Carolina, in England at Newcastle General Hospital, and at the prestigious Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel have developed a way to help boost choline production. Their breakthrough formula also helps stimulate new brain cell growth, leading to a significant improvement in memory, concentration and helps clear stubborn "brain fog."

Are you starving your brain?

If you have experienced one or more of these symptoms, you may benefit from Neurostin™.

- ☑ Do you forget names or dates?
- ☑ Do you sometimes get confused?
- ☑ Do you find it difficult to do more than one thing at a time?
- ☑ Do you often forget why you walked into certain rooms?
- ☑ Do you find it hard to concentrate?

Improve Memory and Focus Without a Prescription

This exciting breakthrough discovery is now available in a once-a-day tablet called Neurostin™ Complex-Memory Pill that is available without a prescription to anyone looking to sharpen their memory. Neurostin™ contains a unique combination of antioxidants, botanicals and nutrients to support critical processes for good cognitive function. Its high concentration of specific brain-boosting ingredients helps improve the synthesis and transmission of neurotransmitters necessary for improved mental clarity. The Neurostin™ formula is completely safe and contains no stimulants, ephedra or caffeine.

Protect Your Memory Now Before It's Too Late

Why wait until your lack of focus or forgetfulness creates an unsafe situation? Today it was your reading glasses, but tomorrow it could be the stove. You forget a phone number today, but tomorrow it could be where you parked your car at the mall.

Just as important is the personal toll that a fading memory can take on your family and friends. Don't you owe it to them and your future to take your brain's fitness as seriously as you do your heart health? It couldn't be easier. In as little as 30 days you can get back the mental sharpness and focus you had when you were 20 years younger! Act today and unlock your mind's true potential!

How Neurostin™ Works

- **Provides the building blocks** of nerve cell membranes to promote optimal brain cell activity
- **Assists in the production** of acetylcholine, a vital component for improved mental performance
- **Helps relax blood vessels** to increase blood flow for maximum nutrient and oxygen delivery
- **Helps dispatch antioxidants** which inhibit free radical oxidation of nerve cell membranes

Having Trouble Finding Neurostin?

The makers of Neurostin™ are so confidentthat they want to offer you a 30-Day Risk Free Trial, so you can experience the results firsthand.

To get your supply of Neurostin™ risk free, for just a small shipping and processing fee call 888-820-3975.

Call 888-820-3975 Today For Your 30 Day Risk-Free Trial of Neurostin™ Complex-Memory

Mention Promotional Code 2NNN11A

www.NeurostinDirect.com

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